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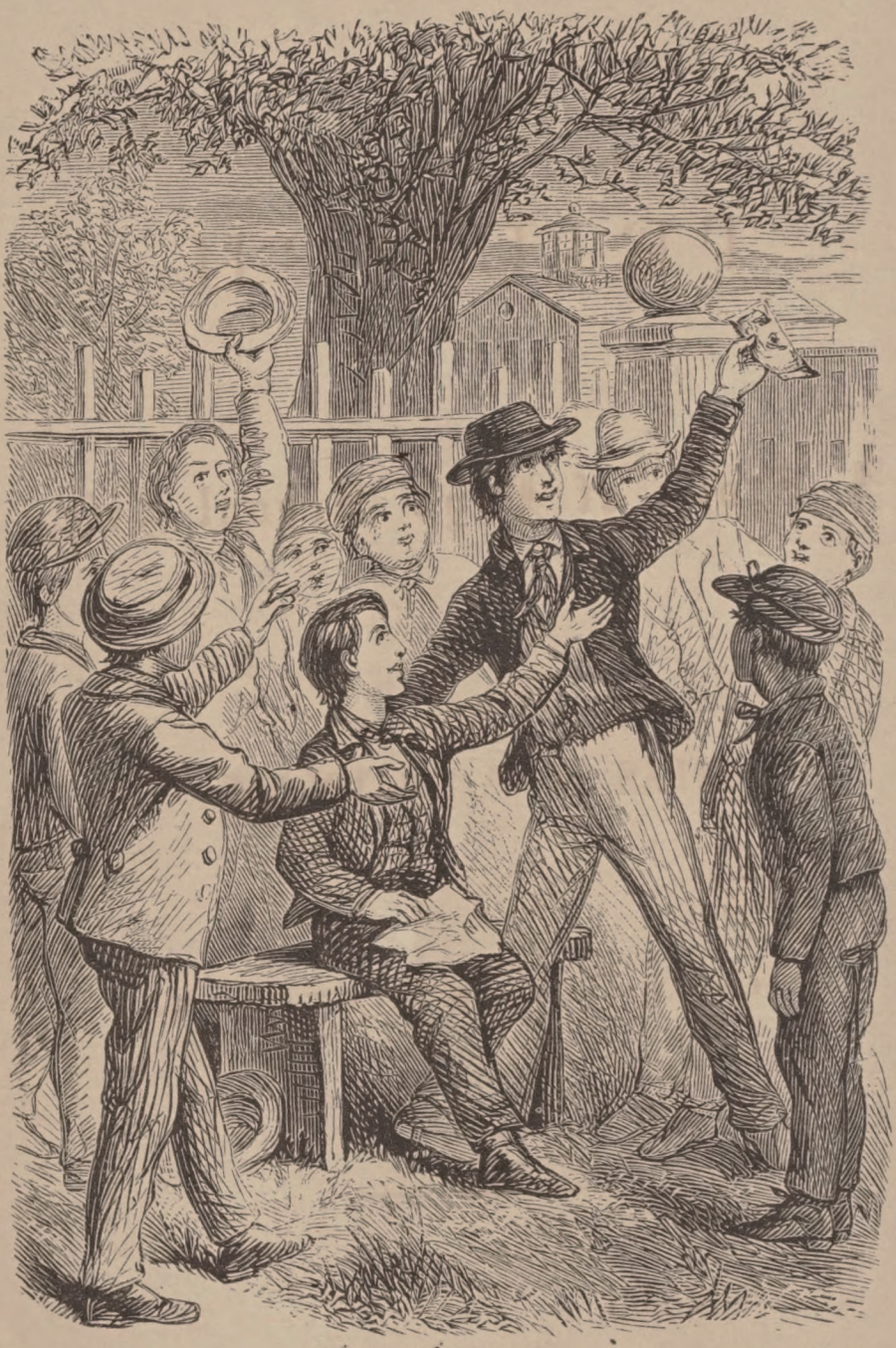

9251 Fish-ball's Discovery.

"Just look at this, Christie Randolph," said he, picking up a ten-dollar bill which had fluttered from the letter to the ground. —Page 139.

THROUGH TRIALS

TO

TRIUMPH.

A Story of Boys' School Life.

BY

MISS H. A. PUTNAM.

THREE ILLUSTRATIONS.

35

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THROUGH TRIALS TO TRIUMPH.

CHAPTER I.

Christie's Home.

"DO you suppose, Phil, the boys will bother me much?" inquired the anxious voice of Christie Randolph as, walking by the side of his cousin, he had been discussing the all-engrossing subject of his probable reception at the Franklin Institute, for which he was bound the following day.

"Well, to be honest, I am afraid the first term will go rather hard with such a slender little chap as you are; for to order about, and bother all greenies, the big fellows seem to think a duty; and, to do them justice, it is one they most energetically perform. Instead of mulling in the house all this time, when you knew you were going to school with me, you should have been developing your biceps;" and

the speaker, young Phil Spencer, doubled up his arm, and felt of his own with evident satisfaction. "Why, they will pounce upon you at once, and down you will tumble like a ninepin, and no one will take the trouble to set you up again, either."

These evil prognostications fell like lead upon the heart of the little fellow thus addressed. That he was shorter and more slender than most boys of his age was a disagreeable truth which had been brought home to him long before; but that this very insignificance was to make him the target for all the young pugilists at the Franklin Institute was a thought even more distasteful than he had yet been forced to entertain; and for the hundredth time that day he bitterly regretted that he must leave his own peaceful home for the roughness and tumult of school-life.

"Cheer up," said Phil, arrested in the gratifying examination before-mentioned by the silence of his companion; "a little buffeting about will do you good. You are getting to be a regular milk-sop, being so much with your sisters, and dreaming away your time; besides you wont mind being knocked about after you

are used to it. You must expect to be 'hazed' from time to time, and to make yourself useful in base-ball by waiting on the fellows; a few cuffs more or less, thrown in, are mere trifles."

The probable recipient of the "mere trifles" hardly viewed the matter with the same resignation and philosophy which Phil displayed, and instead of cheering up as he was bidden, looked, as he felt, like the most miserable of urchins.

"I wish I could remain at home; I hate school; I detest base-ball; and I must confess I don't like to be cuffed either. Do you think now I look so *very* small?" and Christie straightened up in order to appear as large as possible, and anxiously awaited his cousin's verdict.

"Well, I don't know," answered Phil slowly, as it began to dawn upon him that his consolation was not of the most comforting sort. "You do look pretty thin, but perhaps you are one of the wiry little fellows, and have plenty of sand. Now sand is a good thing, next to well-developed biceps."

"Sand, sand! I haven't any," said Christie, looking down at mother earth with a new interest. "I suppose I can get some, though."

"You'd better," returned Phil, a light springing to his eyes. "Just get a little, wrap it up in a piece of paper, and keep it in your pocket, it will be very efficacious;" and Phil, unable to keep sober a moment longer, burst into a loud roar.

Christie's cheeks flushed; that his cousin was laughing at him was evident, but he could not understand wherein he had given him cause, and, painfully mortified, abashed, and indeed hurt, he asked for an explanation.

"That's a good one!" cried Phil, in his most patronizing style. "Don't you know sand means courage? I dare say that after you get away from your sisters' influence you may come out quite a knowing chap; but at present you are uncommonly green, even for a Fresh;" and with this compliment he commenced to whistle to keep from laughing again.

"I don't see why you are always casting slurs upon Annie and Alice," remarked Christie, rather resenting Phil's manner of alluding to his sisters.

"Nonsense!" cried Phil; "I haven't cast any reflections on them. I think they are very nice, in fact, wonderfully jolly for girls; but then, you know, girls are not boys."

This indisputable statement Christie could not deny, but he ventured to suggest apologetically that they could not help it.

"I know it," conceded Phil, in pitying accents, "and a pretty life they have of it, being housed from morning till night. Why, they can't tell a cricket bat from a base-ball bat; and that reminds me I must hurry home and pack my new balls. Be sure you are ready in the morning, Christie, and don't forget the sand." With this playful suggestion Phil turned gayly down a neighboring street, and was soon out of sight.

A happy-go-lucky sort of a fellow was Phil Spencer; thoughtless, heedless, good-natured, and, in his way, very fond of his cousin. That he was a greeny and a milk-sop Phil averred with the utmost candor, always adding, however, that it was his sisters' fault; and having thus shifted the blame upon those pretty shoulders, he condescended to patronize and make much of poor Christie, who in return looked up to him with unbounded admiration. Indeed, Phil was very generally admired by boys; for his grand, generous ways, his invariable good spirits, and his readiness to join in any frolic,

regardless of consequences, were just the attributes most attractive to school-boys. Older friends might fear that his thoughtlessness proceeded from a selfish indifference to the comfort or happiness of others, and that his acts were not influenced by high aims or steady principle. In fact, Phil did not make much effort to do right, nor did he think much of serious subjects; but slipped along feeling very well satisfied with himself, and wishing Christie would take life easy.

His remarks to him during the afternoon were hardly conducive to that end, and made Christie very uncomfortable as he slowly bent his steps homeward. He lingered on the way to argue himself into something of the right kind of feeling. If his cousin, who knew all the circumstances of his life and loved him so well, considered him "green," how would he appear to other boys? O how he wished he was stout and handsome like Phil, whom all admired! Unlike most boys, he had no glorious visions of school-life. What cared he for the pursuits which interested them? He knew no more of cricket and base-ball than his sisters, whose ignorance of such matters had called

forth such unmitigated scorn from his cousin. He could not shoot at a target, set snares, fence, nor excel in any of those sports which most boys delight in; then, there was the sickening dread of leaving home and meeting strangers. He knew he should feel lonely and discontented; and how impossible it would be to do right with no one to help and encourage him, at the very time, too, when he most needed assistance. Visions of severe discipline, hard task-masters, and tormenting companions rose to his mind, and almost decided him to make an effort to escape his hard fate.

Christie knew it was the earnest desire of his parents that he should go to school; he knew the parting was quite as much of a trial to them as to him; but they were willing to make any sacrifice of their own feelings for his good, and it was his duty to comply cheerfully with their wishes. He loved his parents with an ardor and devotion not possible to boys of a different temperament; they were to him the wisest, most beautiful, and the best that his imagination could picture, and many an hour he beguiled dreaming of the time when, by some glorious, impossible act he might prove

to them all he felt. He remembered this the first time the subject of leaving home was discussed before him. Here, now, he could realize his fondest desires, not, to be sure, in the romantic, chivalrous manner of his idle dreams, but naturally and practically. He need not add to their unhappiness by murmurs or complaints; so he had been bravely trying to conceal, as best he might, every look and sign of discomfort. This was no easy task. Many a time he had felt his courage giving way; many a time, as on the present occasion, he had been on the point of begging that the evil day might be put off yet a little longer; but then, as now, he had bravely fought the weakness, and in a few hours would be beyond the possibility of yielding to it.

As he neared his home, it had never seemed more attractive and imposing. It was a large free-stone house on one of the fashionable avenues in New York; and there, watching out of the French plate windows, watching for his return, were two dimpled, rosy faces, which vanished only to appear again at the door, "to meet dear Christie."

"Dear Christie" brightened up as he caught

sight of the sweet young faces of his sisters, and listened to their merry chattering. The new trunk had arrived—such a beauty!—with his initials, "C. W. R.," painted in famous big letters on the end; sundry hints, too, were thrown out concerning certain packages which had been placed therein, which it did not require much cleverness on Christie's part to divine, were presents for himself.

Christie followed the excited young creatures into his own room, and found his mother there busily engaged in packing. Her eyes were very red, and Christie noticed something very like a tear as she bent over the trunk; but she spoke in such a bright, cheerful voice, he concluded he must be mistaken.

"Here is a new desk," she said, "filled with writing materials. I expect many a sheet of this paper will be returned to me, containing glorious accounts of the progress you are making, and the happy times you are having at school."

Christie thought he could not stay there a moment longer, he felt such a strong, ridiculous disposition to cry; so, picking up his cap from the floor, he ran out of the room in such a

hurried, excited manner, that one might very naturally suppose the house was on fire, or some other calamity impending, which necessitated the greatest possible speed. As he wandered through the beautiful house, all the surrounding objects seemed to bid him good-bye, like old familiar friends: there were his favorite pictures, the rare flowers in the conservatory, the aquarium, the golden fishes, the birds, and last, but not least, old Ponto, who poked his cold nose into his hand, and seemed to understand matters exactly.

Christie often remembered this last evening at home, and felt that if it had not been for the uncomfortable sensation before alluded to, it would have been delightful. All seemed to exert themselves to amuse him. One by one the family jokes were aired for his entertainment, and what good stories his father told of his own school life. Even John, the waiter, tried to show his regret at parting with his young master by pressing the raisins upon him, at dinner, with a pertinacity as distracting as it was unusual; then, the pleasant hours in the library that followed, when the old familiar songs never sounded sweeter or more attractive.

Notwithstanding this, Christie was glad when the evening was over and he could escape those loving, watchful eyes which he feared would penetrate through the vail he so clumsily wore.

He had just turned off the gas in his room for the night, and was meditating upon the feasibility of indulging in "a little weep" all unknown to a soul, when the door was softly opened, and he found his mother had come in for one more quiet talk.

"I know it will be a pleasure for you to remember, when far away," she commenced, "that your father and I appreciate the effort you have made at self-control. It is a great trial for one so constitutionally shy and reserved to battle his way alone in the mimic world of a large school."

"O mother, mother, why must I be sent from all I love?" cried Christie.

"Because, my child, the defects of your character are such that your present course of training tends to their development; you are too deficient in energy and self-reliance. To become a successful, useful man, you must learn to think and act for yourself; and that you will never do at home."

"But how can I be independent, how can I do right, while I am the butt of the school? Even Phil says I am green, and the boys will fight me because I am so small."

"I don't believe they will hurt you very much for so innocent a cause. Phil, you know, is a little inclined to exaggerate matters. Of course, you cannot expect that other people will be as careful and considerate of your feelings as your home friends; but you can, in a great measure, influence the treatment of others toward you, and can surround yourself with an atmosphere of love and kindness as surely as you can with one of discontent and distrust. Interest yourself in the feelings and pursuits of others, that you may be companionable. You must remember, however, that pleasant though it may be to gain popularity, it must never be obtained by the sacrifice of principle. Be merry, obliging, sympathizing, and patient, but never do wrong to please your school-fellows, for it is infinitely better to have God's approval than that of the whole world besides."

"But how shall I know what is right without you to help me?"

"God's own word, the Bible, is a better guide

than I can be; and O, my child, let nothing interfere with the study of that. Read it faithfully every night and morning, just as if you were at home, for it teaches us that it is through forgetfulness of self, and a steady, constant struggle to do right, that we become pure and strong. Trials, buffetings, and hardships, are what we need to discipline our hearts, and keep ever before our eyes the object and aim of our life here; so that if they come to you in your school-life, accept them cheerfully as from God."

When his mother left him, an hour later, Christie felt his courage higher and his trust in God stronger than ever before. It was not that school appeared any more attractive, but he felt the necessity of improvement, and he determined to set himself at once to the task of correcting those faults which threatened to interfere so seriously with his future, grudging no time or discipline which could further the work; and with a fervent prayer to God that he would not withhold his aid, he fell into a calm and pleasant sleep, from which he did not wake the following morning until a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder.

It was early morning ; the gray misty sky was just touched up in the east with a few rich tints of gold and rose color, which but dimly hinted of the coming glory, and shed but a feeble light into the room, yet Christie could discern the figure of his father standing by his bedside, and heard his cheery voice bidding him dress at once, as the train would not wait for sleepy boys. The hours which followed were all bustle and confusion. First, the hurried breakfast, for which no one seemed to care. Christie's naturally fine appetite deserted him upon this occasion, and the tempting muffins and rich coffee, which he had often been known to partake of so freely to the imminent risk of his digestion, were left untouched. Then came the carriage and the good-byes, the hand-shaking with all the servants, the hurried kiss, and a "God bless you" from his mother, a tight squeeze from the little girls, and somehow he and his father were in the carriage rattling through the streets. How strange it looked at that time of the day! Christie thought New York hardly seemed New York without the great throng which crowded the streets at noonday. The splendid equipages and their

gay occupants had vanished, and only heavy teams were to be seen, or the milk carts going their rounds, from whence proceeded those shrill, unearthly whistles. The only pedestrians were a few workmen hurrying to their labors, or here and there a policeman sauntering wearily up and down his beat.

Notwithstanding the streets were so devoid of interest, Christie persistently held his head out of the window. It may have been that his curiosity was awakened at this unusual view of the city, or perhaps it was to hide any emotion which he considered unbecoming in a Franklinite. However deficient in excitement they found the streets, the dépôt was the scene of the usual bustle and confusion, and there, in the midst, surrounded by trunks, boxes, hackmen, and porters, stood Phil gesticulating wildly, and disputing loudly with the baggage-master. The cause of his vehemence seemed to center in a big black dog, which, disgusted at the prospect of being severed from his master and put into the baggage-car, was as miserable as a dog might be, and was adding to the general *mêlée* by giving evidence of his displeasure in sundry barks, which were by no means pleasant to hear.

"It is no use talking," said the baggage-master angrily, "the dog will have to go in with the freight. It is against orders to allow them in the passenger-car; they are in the way and annoy people."

"What is the trouble?" broke in the gentlemanly voice of Mr. Randolph, Christie's father and Phil's uncle.

While the man was narrating the circumstances of the case, and bitterly complaining of the obstinacy of boys, Phil took the opportunity of squeezing unmolested through the crowd with the dog, and established himself comfortably in the car, from which height he frowned down upon his enemy in triumph, perfectly indifferent whether the dog was in the way of his fellow-passengers or not.

"All aboard," shouted the conductor, and Christie had hardly time to reach his cousin before he was fairly started on his journey.

"A pretty time I have had of it," said Phil, breathing freely once more, and commencing to stroke the glossy coat of his favorite. "A little more and that baggage-man would have felt the might of my biceps. I am a terrible fellow when I am roused. However, I got the start

of the man without a collision, and here we are as snug as a bug in a rug, and I can save my strength for another occasion. You see I have plenty of use for it, as it is against the rule for boys to keep dogs, and I have to pummel some of the little chaps well to prevent their telling the teachers of the little circumstance. No trouble about the other fellows; they find it very convenient to have a knowing animal like this at their command without the peril of discovery resting on their heads."

"But I shouldn't think you would want it to rest on yours," said Christie.

"I can't say I do exactly enjoy that part of it; but it is all in the way of business, and this is a paying one. You see there is no fun in gunning without a dog, and the Franklinites are very fond of that sport, though the innocent diversion is forbidden by the authorities. However, that only adds to the excitement of the thing, and between you and me and the post," said Phil, with a confidential nudge, "it is very freely indulged in by the boys."

"Surely you don't go, Phil, when you are expressly forbidden?"

"O bless you, no, not often," replied Phil de-

murely, "because I prefer the profits of letting out my dog to the others for a stated sum. Half of that dear delightful money I am forced to part with weekly to a greedy villager in compensation for his keep, the rest is a neat little amount, which ekes out my allowance to very comfortable proportions, and makes me the envy of the school. Some of the boys pretend to be dreadfully shocked at the way I get the money, but I notice that they don't disdain borrowing occasionally. I always lend, though I find they are apt to forget such trifling debts."

Christie listened to his cousin with astonishment. That school rules were often infringed upon he never doubted, but that they should be set at naught and profited by in this world-wise manner by a boy as honorable as he had always considered Phil, startled him.

"Money is a good thing every-where," cried Phil, "but it is particularly comfortable at school. The boys think ten times as much of you if you dash about with plenty of chink. By the way, how much does Uncle Christopher allow you a week?"

"O I have never had any regular allowance,"

answered Christie; "I've always had money given me as I needed it, and I suppose I shall continue now in the same old way."

A look of great annoyance passed over Phil's bright face at this announcement.

"It don't sound very promising," said he, "but I remember your gov. tips you pretty often. I hope you will always seem flush before the boys, for they all know your father is rich, and will expect you to be pretty liberal with them. You'd better buy a good many bull's eyes just at first. That looks well, and tastes better;" and Phil beamed upon his cousin as if he had imparted a very valuable plan of action, which it had taken great shrewdness and cleverness to devise.

"Don't like them," said Christie.

"All the better," returned the unquenchable Phil; "you can pass them round, and seem very generous."

"But I shouldn't have money for any thing else if I did that often," said Christie.

"Why not make more, as I do. There is nothing in this world like enterprise," remarked this embryo trafficker, settling himself back in his seat with much complacency. "I know a

first-rate way to make money this term, and if you say so we will go partnerships."

"Would it involve breaking the rules of the school?" asked Christie hesitatingly. "If so, don't say any thing about it."

"Afraid I shall put naughty ideas into your head?" observed Phil maliciously. "Well, I'll try not to corrupt you until you make friends with some of the good fellows who never break rules, and are perfect prigs. Faugh, how I do dislike religion!"

"You do!" exclaimed Christie, opening his eyes in amazement. "Don't you like people to be patient and gentle?"

Phil bowed his head in assent.

"And to be truthful, charitable, and unselfish, without pride or petty vanities," continued Christie.

"Don't be silly, Christie; of course I like that."

"Then you like religion, for that is religion, or the fruits of religion."

"Well, I don't fancy religious boys, then. There's Whitehouse; what a splendid fellow he would be if he wasn't pious!'

"Perhaps it is his piety that makes him

splendid," suggested Christie, "for religion is purifying and ennobling."

"Hullo!" whistled the volatile Phil, who was beginning to weary of so serious a subject; "do you see that somber, shabby-looking fellow two seats ahead, on the other side of the car; that's Dabney, of the first class."

Christie followed his cousin's gaze, and noticed for the first time a boy dressed in rusty mourning. This boy's back being turned toward him, Christie could not see his face, but his figure was awkward in the extreme. He had high and narrow shoulders, on which his head seemed almost to rest, so short was his neck; while his legs, long and thin, were at present disposed of in the most ungainly fashion; the one being wound around the other as if by habit, and the whole figure almost bent double over a book in which he appeared to be absorbed.

"Poor fellow, he is in mourning," said Christie.

"All but his hair," laughed Phil, "which is bright colored enough for a more festive youth. As you see him now, so he is always; bent double over a book. He is the greatest dig in the school."

"What do you mean by a 'dig?'" asked Christie.

"Well, greenie, be it known, a dig is a fellow who is always working at his lessons, like Dabney. He never looks at or thinks of any thing else, I really believe; and the teachers are continually begging him to take more exercise and not to overtax himself. O dear, how strange it must seem," mused Phil. From which remark Christie shrewdly surmised that his cousin was not often so entreated.

"Is he a friend of yours?" questioned Christie, beginning to feel an interest in his odd-looking traveling companion.

"I never exchanged half a dozen words with him in my life. He never speaks to any one unless he is obliged to. As he is in our dormitory I saw a great deal of him last term, and taking compassion on his forlorn, desolate state, I tried once to make friends with him; but he repulsed me in such a disagreeable manner that I fled to the society of a few chosen spirits, real wide-awakes, who know how to enjoy themselves in spite of monitors, teachers, or the Rev. Dr. himself. You mustn't peach, Christie, but we are members of a secret society, gotten up

for the purpose of having a good time, and helping each other out of scrapes ; I'm treasurer, and have considerable influence. I will try and get you in. Upon my word, there is the president now," said Phil as the car stopped at a way-station, and a boy was seen strolling leisurely up and down the platform, unconcernedly eating a large piece of gingerbread. "Bonner as large as life, up to his old tricks, stuffing. I must go and speak to him. Come on, Christie."

But Christie, shy of strangers, was not obedient to the call, and on being left alone, curled himself up in a corner of the seat and speculated on all he had heard. The little insight into school-life which had just been given him confirmed the suspicions he already entertained, that it would require no small degree of moral heroism to follow the dictates of his conscience, and bear the ridicule of Phil, who, it seemed, belonged to a set that looked upon the teachers as so many monsters, who, to gratify their tyrannical tastes, made rules to which only the weak willingly submitted. Christie knew this was not so. His common sense told him that rules were necessary to secure order and discipline,

without which a school would fail of the end for which it was intended.

He had always been surrounded by the purifying influences of a Christian home. His parents were humble followers of Christ, who in their daily life gave evidence of the grace which cometh from him alone. The beauty of holiness, thus exemplified, was not lost upon this impressible child. The story of Christ's sufferings had early touched his heart, and he earnestly desired to dedicate his manhood to the Gospel ministry that he might lead others to love, trust, and worship that Saviour who alone can bring eternal life. But how could he stimulate others to the culture of a spirit of obedience toward God unless he could humble his own heart? How could he teach or help others until the elements of the Christian life were strongly developed in himself? He had learned through God's Holy Word that the Almighty takes his own way in perfecting the human soul; that the every-day trials and annoyances of life alone can discipline our hearts. It is through trials and temptations resisted that we are made pure and strong. Why, then, should he shrink from the life now opened before him if he knew it was

what he needed to make him good and useful? O weak and timid heart! he feared lest in resisting temptation he should being ridicule upon himself and be deserted by Phil, the only one in a large school upon whom he had any claim.

With this dread in his mind he looked out of the car window: rich meadow lands, wooded hills, intersecting valleys, and winding streams passed swiftly before his vision. How great and wonderful are God's works! Surely the Being who made all this was able to comfort and sustain him, though every earthly friend should forsake him.

CHAPTER II.

The Franklin Institute.

THE sun had already set, but brilliant clouds still marked the western sky, and shed a pleasant glow over the quiet New England village which boasted of the Franklin Institute. That stately edifice afforded a great contrast to the low, simple cottages which, separated by neat flower-gardens, lined each side of the main street. Indeed, it was the only pretentious building the village contained. Tall poplars and somber fir-trees studded the lawn in front, which sloped toward the road, and was concealed from the passer-by by a high wall ; but at certain hours of the day the tumultuous uproar of many voices apprised the villagers that some eighty boys were disporting themselves therein, or on the playground in the rear of the house.

At present a group of boys, in sundry attitudes, might be seen sitting or standing on the

wall watching a clumsy old stage-coach as it slowly toiled toward them. Each day this vehicle was the object of the greatest interest, for it brought to the boys those dear letters from home, full of pleasant tidings, loving messages, and kind wishes. At the commencement of every term the arrival of the stage was fraught with an additional interest, for at each advent it was sure to turn into the well-kept carriage-path which led to the door of the school, and deposited, amid shouts of welcome, its load of scholars.

Most of the pupils had already arrived, for it was the custom, though not exacted by the teachers, that they should be present in time to get settled and classified before lessons began, and the group on the wall were giving wild guesses as to how many of the delinquents might be expected that evening.

"I bet you ten to one that Bonner is in that stage!" cried one, tossing a green apple into the air, and almost knocking over his nearest neighbor in the vain endeavor to catch it again.

"Harry Maxwell would make a most expert juggler!" exclaimed Johnson as the apple

lighted on his hat. "His sleight of hand is remarkable."

"Yes, Maxwell is a very remarkable little fellow; good at any thing," observed another. "For instance, he can guess to a certainty who is in that stage, especially if he has had the advantage of getting a peep at the trunks that have already arrived, and are now in the back hall, as I have good reason to know, having just come from there."

"And whose trunks have come?" cried a chorus of voices.

"Jack Bonner's, Dabney's, Phil Spencer's, and one other—I am unable to say who owns it; brand new—marked C. W. R."

"Perhaps those are the initials of the new scholar the teachers were talking about yesterday," suggested Johnson. "I only hope he is as jolly and good-natured as Spencer himself. He is a fellow after my own heart."

"Then Christie Randolph wont suit you," said one of the oldest of the group, who hitherto had been but a silent listener to the remarks of the others. "I have seen him in New York, and he is as different from Phil as he possibly can be—a regular verdant green."

"All the better for us," returned Lawton, the acknowledged dandy of the school, tapping his boots, which shone only as the boots of a dandy can shine; "if he is that sort of a fellow we shall have twice the sport 'hazing' him that we had last half over little Maxwell here."

"Here comes the stage! Off with your caps, boys; three cheers for the travelers!"

A large crowd gathered around the stage as it stopped, and many bright eyes scanned poor Christie as, bashful and shrinking, he appeared before them.

Little Maxwell, standing in the background, noted his slender form and diffident manner. "Wont he have to take it, though!" was his mental ejaculation.

"This way," said Phil as he led the way into the house; "we must report ourselves to Dr. Grimshaw. There is nothing very terrible about him, Christie, so you needn't wince."

Notwithstanding this assurance, Christie's heart almost stood still as his cousin knocked at the library door, and a voice from within bade them enter. Phil was right. There was certainly nothing very terrible about the Doctor: a kind, elderly gentleman, with grave, benign manners,

and a smile as bright as that of any of his pupils. He gave the boys such a hearty welcome, and hoped they would be happy there, with such evident sincerity, that Christie's heart warmed toward him at once.

"I know I shall love the Doctor," was Christie's remark as he walked up stairs with Phil.

"What! love old Grim?" laughed Phil. "Well, every one to their taste; though, to be sure, he is an improvement on Honey."

"Whom do you mean by Honey, Phil?"

"Hunnewell, one of the assistant teachers; a perfect hound for smelling out mischief. He sniffs it from afar, and when once on the track one might as well give up first as last. He is the most provoking of men. Kept me an hour after school every day for six months to recite grammar. It's always 'third person, singular number, and agrees with John.' Bah! how I hate the sound of it."

"I should think Honey, as you call him, would hate it too. It must be very tiresome going over the same thing year in and year out. I am afraid I shouldn't make a very faithful teacher."

"You can pity the teachers if you like. I save all my sympathy for myself;" and Phil, with a great flourish, opened the dormitory door.

A look of disappointment crossed Christie's face as he noted the contents of the room. The rows of little beds placed at intervals against the wall looked neat and comfortable; yet Christie was forcibly reminded of a hospital, and in a dejected tone imparted his impression to Phil.

"It's sociable; I like it," returned Phil, planking himself on the white bed-spread, sublimely indifferent to muddy boots. "This is my bed, and that is yours. We are neighbors, you see. The one on the other side of you belongs to Fish-ball. Guess you'll like Fish-ball; he's jolly."

"What a queer name," said Christie.

"Yes, it is queer. It's the short for Fisher Baldwin. It teazed him awfully when the boys called him so at first; but he's used to it now, and submits gracefully."

"I'd rather have a cell to myself than have to room with so many. It must be very disagreeable to live always in a crowd, with no op-

portunity of being alone once in awhile," said Christie.

"What do you want to be alone for? Now, Christie, let me give you a piece of advice. Just drop all nonsense, and don't be too religious. It makes a boy dreadfully unpopular here. There is Whitehouse; he's the one I told you was such a splendid fellow. The boys call him Parson, of course, because he reads and prays every night just as if he were at home."

"And why should he not? Surely he needs God's help and protection as much here as elsewhere," observed Christie.

"That all sounds very well; but I want to know if God would not hear his prayers just as soon if he did not make such a parade of his piety, but said them quietly, after he had gone to bed and the boys thought him asleep?" asked Phil.

"I don't know about that," returned Christie thoughtfully, speaking rather to himself than to Phil. "I have always been taught to kneel humbly when I address a holy God; should I refrain from doing so through fear of his creatures I doubt whether he would listen to me."

"I do believe Parson Whitehouse's assistant has arrived! But there is the chapel bell; perhaps you would prefer the society of the saints. We are all obliged to go to chapel in the morning, but we can do as we like about attending the evening service, consequently there is no trouble about seats; one can usually have his choice;" and Phil laughed.

Tired, disappointed, and troubled, Christie heard gladly that there was this refuge whither he could flee and look up for strength and comfort. So he left Phil in the dormitory, crossed the hall, and entered the chapel. A few boys were scattered about the room. As Phil had implied, there were not many who took advantage of this sweet evening hour to hush all earthly thoughts to sleep, and realize the blessing God promises to those who gather together in his name.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" fell upon Christie's ear like a message from Christ. As he thought of him, how tender, loving, great he seemed! What matter if his school-fellows did call him "Parson Whitehouse's Assistant?" Better to lose their favor than the glorious

promises held out to him from above. Gradually, joy and peace banished the homesick weary feelings from his heart, and brought him happiness even upon the first day of his dreaded school-life.

CHAPTER III.

New Companions.

"WHY don't you unpack, you lazy thing?" said Phil to Christie. The latter had rejoined him in the dormitory, after the chapel service mentioned in the last chapter. "Your room is better than your company here;" and Phil, as he spoke, dived into his trunk, and hauling up an old jacket and a couple of shirts, flung them on the floor, looking very wistfully at the spot on the bed where Christie was seated, complacently watching the unpacking which was going on in all quarters of the apartment.

Being thus unceremoniously ordered to take himself off, Christie unlocked his trunk. There was a certain satisfaction to him in doing so, for the packages of which his sisters had spoken were not forgotten, and were something of a balm to his feelings as, Turk-fashion, he sat on the floor to examine them

"O Phil," he exclaimed in a jubilant tone, "mother has put up a box of nuts! Don't you want it?" and he sent it rolling over the floor.

Its journey was intercepted by a short, dumpy little fellow, who had previously been introduced to Christie, without formality, as Fish-ball.

"Nuts for me to crack!" cried he, lifting the cover and helping himself plentifully. "Got any thing else good?"

Christie was too much engaged to heed this question. He had opened two of the packages, and had found a very handsome pocket Bible and a dressing-gown. The latter was a gift from his sister Alice, whose girlish taste had led to the selection of a gown of the most gorgeous description. It was pale *mauve*, lined, and faced with silk, striped with crimson and gold. A gilt cord and tassel also embellished the garment at the belt. The whole affair was so characteristic of the giver that Christie could not help laughing softly to himself as he folded it, almost tenderly, and placed it on the foot of the bed until he could make room for it elsewhere. "I will never tell her I couldn't wear such a ridiculous-looking thing here," he

thought, and then turned to the last package, which contained an illustrated copy of the "Arabian Nights." This book was a great favorite of his, and in looking over its delightful pages again he became oblivious of every thing else until he was roused by the loud cheers and laughter of some dozen boys. The excitement was occasioned by Fish-ball, who, very much to Christie's astonishment, was decked in his new dressing-gown, turned inside out, and engaged in throwing his new Bible against the ceiling, and turning a somersault while it was in the air, always regaining his feet in time to catch it in its descent, and performing other gymnastic feats equally brilliant.

Much practice had perfected Fish-ball in such harlequinian antics; and Christie might have been amused at his agility if he had not been so shocked at the use he was making of the book he had been taught to look upon as something too holy to be touched irreverently. His first impulse was to ask him for it; but the want of moral courage and independence—the serious defects of an otherwise beautiful character—prevented him from doing so.

"Go it, Fish-ball!" "Bravo! bravo!" sung out the spectators.

"How can you laugh at such treatment of the Bible? You ought to be ashamed, Fish-ball!" cried Whitehouse, with a boldness which Christie envied. "Look out for my head!" he continued, dodging, as the book fell at his feet. Picking it up, he looked with admiration at its beautiful binding and clear type, and turning to the fly-leaf read, in a distinct voice, "CHRISTIE W. RANDOLPH."

"Who is he?" he inquired, looking round to ascertain to whom to restore the book.

"It is my Bible; please give it to me," said Christie, emerging from his concealed position, and advancing into the middle of the room to recover his property, with some confusion at being brought into notice before so many.

> "The speaker, rising to be seen,
> Looks very red, because so very green,"

observed Fish-ball in a loud aside.

"I say, Greeny," cried Bonner, "you're one of the religious chaps; I know by your cut. Come, now, out with your colors!"

"I am not ashamed of them," said Christie stoutly, feeling encouraged to speak boldly by

Whitehouse's example, notwithstanding the fact that he saw Phil's head protrude from under the foot of his bed, and shaken furtively in disapproval; "I am trying to be religious, though I often fail."

"What a blessed community this is!" said Johnson facetiously. "We can boast of two popes now — Pius the First, and Pius the Second."

"It's vulgar to pun," said Lawton sententiously.

"That sounds bitter. I am afraid you're coveting this resplendent wrap. I've observed, Lawton, you're always crabbed and spiteful when any one else gets any thing neat and tasty," replied Fish-ball, tapping the bright silk lining of the dressing-gown with rather grimy fingers. "My! Randolph, there hasn't been such a dashing toilet seen here during my day, unless we except Dabney's dress-coat," continued he, referring to the funny roundabout jacket Dabney had on, such a one as the little boys in the sixth class wore and longed to discard for the coat and vest of their seniors.

It was rumored in the school that this jacket was the very one that Dabney wore when, as a

little boy, he first appeared at the institution. Very few of the scholars could remember that event, but they who did vouched for the truth of the assertion. At all events it was sadly small and shabby, and added greatly to the awkwardness of his appearance.

Christie was glad to see that the boys, as a general thing, looked disgusted at this personal allusion; and Phil, with the laudable object of saying something in Dabney's defense, remarked that he "didn't know there was any law against big fellows wearing jackets if they cared to."

It seemed to Christie that Phil had taken up the cudgels in Dabney's behalf most unnecessarily, as that strange boy appeared unconscious that he was the subject of remark, and settled himself to read without even a glance toward the speakers, appropriating to his own use the only lamp in his corner of the dormitory, and, for his further convenience, tilting back his chair in such wise as to exclude every one else from the table at which he was seated.

"I heard that Dabney was going to take up a new study this term. I hope it is lessons in

politeness," said Johnson, indignant at the monopoly of light.

"Why don't you go down stairs for a candle?" croaked Phil, flapping his arms, and leaping from bed to bed like a bull-frog.

"Hold, there! Don't jump on my clean things!" screamed Lawton. But Phil was making a bee-line across the room, and nothing could stop him, not even Dabney's table, which stood in the way, and upon which he lighted, notwithstanding it was a slight one, and already held the lamp and Dabney's books. As might have been expected, it gave way under this additional weight, and, with a loud crash, Phil, the lamp, the books, and Dabney himself, were landed on the floor in darkness.

"Quick! quick! bring a light! I've broken my leg, I do believe!" roared Phil.

"And serves you right if you have," said Bonner. "Here, Maxwell, don't you hear? Run down into the housekeeper's room and ask her for some candles. Stay; you go, Randolph."

"Willingly," replied Christie, "if I but knew the way."

"It is plain to be seen he don't know Mad-

ame Mac," laughed Johnson, "or he wouldn't be so willing to visit her. You had better not mention that there has been an accident up here, that's all. Come, start yourself!"

"I'll show you the way, Christie," said Phil, springing to his feet with alacrity, notwithstanding his recent complaints of a broken member, and he dragged Christie after him out out of the room.

"What a kind fellow you are!" exclaimed Christie affectionately as they traversed the halls together. "You don't know how I dreaded going to the housekeeper's room after Johnson's remark, and it was such a relief when you offered to go with me."

"I don't believe Dabney thinks I am kind," answered Phil.

"And why not?" asked Christie. "You took his part when the fellows joked about his coat, and though he appeared not to hear what was said, I am quite sure he did."

"O I know he heard and felt every whit as indifferent as he seemed. There is only one way of annoying Dabney, and that is to interrupt him when he's studying, which I took solid comfort in doing just now."

"Why?" inquired Christie.

"O because I felt like it! It's fun," answered Phil.

"I don't understand it," thought Christie. "Phil is a perfect contradiction. He seems independent and manly enough sometimes, and yet I am sure he didn't like it when I confessed I was trying to be religious. He defends a boy he cares nothing for, and the next moment purposely annoys him; and now he is taking the trouble to go to the housekeeper's room just to oblige me."

But Phil's conduct was by no means as remarkable as it appeared to his inexperienced cousin. It is ever thus with those who act without principle. They are carried hither and thither by every impulse; first in the right direction, and then in the wrong, as unstable and unreliable as a ship without its rudder, tossing upon the deep, at the mercy of every wave, and drifting in whichever course the current carries it.

CHAPTER IV.

The First Temptation.

"WHAT do I see before me? Phil Spencer studying, as I am alive! and it isn't the last of the term either, when such a natural phenomenon might be explained. Dear me! what's going to happen?"

"Nothing, except that you are going to hinder me, Bonner," returned Phil, not raising his eyes from his book, and continuing to pace up and down the school-room floor, reading aloud in that sing-song, mechanical voice which he always adopted when studying.

"Hinder you from what?" asked Bonner.

"From trying to learn my lesson, to be sure," said Phil.

"Well, it is a pity, when you try so seldom," laughed Bonner; "but I want to get up some fun this afternoon, and you must help."

"I am willing to give my valuable assistance, only upon one condition;" and Phil shut up his

book with a loud slam, and confronted Bonner, as if he expected opposition. "I want my cousin, Christie Randolph, admitted as a member of our society."

"Nonsense! Have you lost your senses? Why, I would as soon think of your proposing an infant in arms; for, 'pon my word, he don't know any more. He is a perfect noodle!" cried Bonner, with characteristic freedom.

"I notice the 'perfect noodle' ranks higher in the classes than you do," said Phil with complacency.

"That's too bad," remarked Bonner, with a good-natured smile. "I don't say that he doesn't know more Latin, but he don't know beans, and that's flat. He isn't our kind any way—too good entirely for such company; he'd peach, and get us into no end of trouble."

"You don't know him, if you think so. He'd be as dumb as an oyster if he promised as much. I'll answer for that. I'm surprised at you, Bonner; I thought you had the gift that belongs to all successful leaders, to recognize merit when you meet it. I tell you, he'll make lots of fun for us; and if he's 'green,' why, I remember the time when you yourself had

not ripened into the very wise president I see before me."

"That's just it," said Bonner; "when I first came here I confess I was green, and didn't I have to take it! How the big boys did torment me! Now I'm going to square up by taking my revenge on the new fellows."

It wasn't the first time Phil had heard these sentiments, but somehow they never had sounded so ungenerous and contemptible to him before.

"If we should admit your cousin into the society," Bonner continued, "we are pledged not to bother him, and we should lose all our fun. I wont agree to it."

"Come, let's talk it over," said Phil, in his most fascinating manner, as if he had but that moment broached the subject.

"What have we been doing?" growled Bonner.

Phil ignored this question, and commenced to enumerate Christie's virtues.

"He's good-natured, obliging, and real generous. His father is awful rich, too."

"Is he?" answered Bonner, with interest. "How much allowance does he have?"

"Allowance, pooh!" exclaimed Phil, in his grand style. "His father don't dole out allowances to him, you'd better believe; he has what he wants, and is very liberal with it. Now if he were a member of our society," continued this wily youth, "he'd help us lots. The funds are remarkably low, as you very well know."

Jack Bonner hesitated. A brief struggle ensued between cupidity and revenge, while Phil patiently waited for a reply.

"Money is no object," said Bonner at length; "I would rather have the fun."

"Very well," returned Phil, "this is the first favor I have ever asked of you. I have run all sorts of risks for the society, and am ready to do so again, if you will oblige me in this matter; if not, I shall resign my office, and you can get another treasurer. I hope he wont have as much trouble over ways and means as I have had. It isn't very easy always to get money for our little spreads, and I wish him joy of the task."

Bonner was entirely unprepared for this; to lose the treasurer—his right hand-man, who was equal to any emergency—wasn't to be thought of for a moment. Phil had great

ability as a financier; he could collect more money, and get a greater number of apples and ginger-nuts with it, than any other boy in school—a talent fully appreciated by his companions, who respected him accordingly.

"Well, well, Spencer, I didn't know you had it so much at heart. Of course I wont oppose it, for one, though such a thing was never heard of before; and I know the rest wont like it. I think it is uncommonly queer you're so fond of such a noodle."

"Give us your hand!" cried Phil with most unnecessary fervor, too much delighted at having gained his point to mind the uncomplimentary manner Bonner spoke of his *protégé*. "You're a brick; I always said it. I have no fears now but that I can push Christie in. I am sure you wont be sorry."

"I wish *I* were," muttered Bonner to himself as he left the school-room, after having obtained the promise he had wished from Phil, to meet him in a couple of hours, with his dog, at the little saddler's shop around the corner.

In the mean time Phil sought Christie to impart to him his wonderful good fortune, as he mentally termed it. He found him on the

play-ground, listlessly watching a game of base-ball, which was being pursued with an interest and enjoyment perfectly incomprehensible to him; but Phil, notwithstanding his haste to report the news, could not resist stopping a moment to applaud a masterly stroke before he put his arm around his cousin, and led him off to a quiet corner, where, under the friendly shade of an old apple tree, they could talk unmolested. During the few days that he had been at school, it was wonderful to Christie what little opportunity there had been for any of those confidential chats with Phil in which he delighted, for the reason that his cousin was always surrounded by others, or had business on hand evidently of the most pressing nature. In fact, Christie had been thrown very much on his own resources; for, being shy, he had made no acquaintances among the boys, none of whom, in his eyes, could be compared to his handsome cousin. The prospect of a quiet talk with him, and the delight of being able to speak of his home and the dear ones there, brought the light to his big blue eyes, and brightened his quiet face, till Phil wondered how Jack Bonner could call him a "noodle," or feel for

him any thing but the respect and affection he himself entertained. Perhaps, too, he was sorry for having neglected him, for his manner was unusually kind when he inquired if he had been "lonesome."

"You see," continued Phil, apologetically, "I have had my hands full; for what with the snares, the dog, and our secret society, I haven't had a moment to myself, and almost lost sight of you altogether. It wont happen again, for I have as good as got you a membership in our society, and when that takes place you'll be one of us. You understand the boys don't cultivate outsiders, because they hamper our talk, and we should have to be always on the lookout not to let the cat out of the bag. After you get in, you'll find this a very different sort of a place. It must be remarkably slow for you now, old fellow."

Christie had noticed the lull in the conversation upon the very few occasions he had gained sufficient courage to join the group which Phil helped to form, and was glad to find, by this remark, that it had been prompted by no personal dislike to himself, as he had feared. In his desolate position, nothing could seem more

attractive than to become one of any set; but it was especially so since it proved the only means of securing more of Phil's society.

Christie was not a stupid boy; as bright, perhaps, as Phil himself, though they were so different. If he lacked Phil's quickness and force, he possessed that intuitive knowledge of character which is to be found only in sensitive natures; and now, he felt convinced that these companions whom his cousin offered him were not safe. They did not care, in the least, for the things he had been taught most to reverence; they laughed to scorn all law and order in the school, and were banded secretly together to break the rules and defy discipline. He knew the importance of choosing proper companions at the commencement of his school career. He feared his cousin's friends would lead him into a thousand evils, and how could he pray God to deliver him from temptation if he voluntarily placed himself in the way of it.

All this passed through his mind as he stood that sunny afternoon under the old tree, with the bright tempter by his side. But near him

stood one, all unseen and unthought of, Christie's good angel, whom God had sent to guard and help him; it was he who uttered these admonitions, and prompted him to tell Phil he did not care to be a member.

"You really do not mean, Christie, that you refuse to join?" inquired Phil, hardly believing the evidence of his senses, "you can't be in earnest."

"I never was more so in my life; but pray don't be angry, Phil."

This was a most unnecessary request, for Phil's astonishment was too great to admit of any other emotion. He had expected opposition in getting him a membership, but that the honor should be rejected had not even occurred to him before.

"I begin to think you're a noodle, just as Bonner said," he observed as he watched Christie; to mark the effect of his words "why don't you wake up, and show some pluck; you have plenty of it in reserve." He added this compliment as a salve for the wound he had just inflicted, for he saw by Christie's flushed face that it had cut deeper than he had intended, and he felt really sorry he had hurt him.

"Come," he continued, "as a great favor to me, I wish you would consent to join; any other boy would go wild over such good fortune; there are only about a dozen of us, any way, the best and jolliest boys in the school."

"Don't talk about it," answered Christie, trying to waive the question, as Phil grew persuasive, and he began to feel his firmness giving way; "I am going to show my pluck by not joining."

"Well, you'll need it," said Phil, sidling up to Christie, and lowering his voice to a mysterious whisper. "I never before told tales out of school, but, for the sake of our cousinship, and all that sort of thing, I am going to turn traitor, and warn you that the boys have their eyes on you, and you will get dreadfully 'hazed' unless you belong to our society. It has only been through my influence that you have escaped thus far; only last night the fellows were talking of hazing you, but I put them off. Of course I can't do that always; the only protection I can offer you is to become one of us and haze boys yourself, and now, for the last time, wont you oblige me, Christie?"

"For the last time, no," answered he.

Poor child! As Phil turned away the old feeling of loneliness and friendlessness took possession of him; his arms instinctively stretched themselves out after his cousin, but he would not call him back. Why should he? It would only necessitate further parley upon a subject, which, for his own sake, he felt it would be better to avoid. The certainty that the boys were about to haze him also oppressed his spirits; the secrecy and mystery of the thing was horrible to him, and yet, with a philosophy and good sense which proved he was no noodle, notwithstanding Bonner's assertion to the contrary, he made up his mind to bear patiently and good-naturedly whatever inconvenience they chose to subject him to, thereby making attractive that religion which so few of the boys understood or admired.

God moves in a mysterious way, and the trials which we mark out as our portion here below seldom fall to our lot; nevertheless we are not exempt from grief, temptations, and difficulties of some kind. They always surround the Christian path, and are fashioned by the divine Hand as stepping-stones to higher things.

So, though the hazing which Christie had fortified himself to bear never took place, yet he had need, as we shall see, of the sweet consolation which religion brings to carry him through trials to triumph.

CHAPTER V.

The New Teacher.

"WHAT will you give me for my news?" asked Fish-ball the next day as he dashed up to a party of boys who were sitting on the doorsteps, waiting for him to join them before starting off on a tramp through the woods.

"I suspect you've been up to mischief by your looks," said Johnson.

"'Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind,'" returned Fish-ball.

"Out with it; don't keep us waiting!" cried Phil. "Have you had another of those hair-breadth escapes for which you are so justly famous?"

"Do keep quiet, and let him tell!" exclaimed Bonner impatiently.

"Well," said Fish-ball, enjoying his present importance, "we have a new teacher."

"Bless me! hadn't we enough of them already?" exclaimed Bonner.

"No; it is necessary to have an extra one to look after you," laughed Johnson.

"I wonder what sort of a person he is," remarked Whitehouse.

Fish-ball looked greatly amused, and, to work off a little pent-up vitality, commenced to dance an Indian war-dance, to the great disgust of the others, who were plying him with questions.

"What would you think of *me* for a teacher?" asked he, brandishing a rod over the heads of imaginary pupils.

"I should think you would inspire a great deal of awe in the minds of us scholars," said Johnson.

"Well, my fine fellows, our new teacher isn't much older than I am."

"Whew!" whistled Phil.

"And what is more, he's an old scholar into the bargain."

"Who is it?" exclaimed all in a breath.

"No one more or less than Dabney."

"Who is your authority?" asked Bonner.

"Old Grim and Dabney himself."

"What! they took you into their confidence?" asked Johnson, looking incredulous.

"Not intentionally," replied he. "I'll tell you how it all came about. I was playing with my best ball in the garden when it flew into Grim's private study, and lodged on the top of one of the book-cases there. Although it is forbidden ground, I vaulted through the open window to get it. While I was standing on old Grim's much-valued encyclopedia, fishing down the ball with a splendidly illustrated copy of Shakspeare, I heard approaching footsteps. Not wishing to be caught trespassing in that way by the Doctor, I had just time to squeeze between the book-cases and drag a big chair in front of me before the door opened, and Dr. Grimshaw, followed by Dabney, came into the room. Grim invited Dabney very politely to be seated, and then, taking the letter he offered him, put on his specs and commenced to read. I concluded, from the conversation I overheard between them, that some person who has been paying for his education has died lately, and left Dabney without the means of liquidating his school-bills. Grim told him he deeply regretted losing him; that he was a faithful student, a fine scholar, and a great credit to the Institution.

"Poor Dabney, in the mean time, hadn't a word to say for himself, as usual, but stood twirling his fingers and looking so painfully awkward and idiotic that I almost laughed outright."

"I never before saw a fellow that didn't, couldn't, and wouldn't talk," said Phil.

"But he can talk," continued Fish-ball. "He was quite fired with eloquence at length, and said that he had read somewhere that there was no position in life which was not attainable by years of constant effort in one direction, and that he had plans for the future from which nothing should cause him to swerve. To further them he would accept any position, however menial, whereby he could continue his education, and suggested sweeping the school-room, taking charge of the dormitories, or teaching the little boys in payment for his schooling.

"Grim seemed to think he might make him a very valuable auxiliary, and said that he might preside over our dormitory, keep the halls and school-room clean, and he would consult with Mr. Hunnewell at once about the classes he could teach. Exit Grim, Honey, and

last, but by no means least, your humble servant."

"What do you think of that for news?" said Fish-ball.

"I think it's uncommonly mean," answered Johnson, with a blighted look.

"I didn't know you had so much compassion for the unfortunate," replied Bonner.

"I have a great deal, especially when I consider that we are the unfortunates in this instance. Pray, how are we to have any fun with a teacher right under our noses all the time?"

"Farewell to all practical jokes, 'hazing,' and that sort of thing, in our dormitory."

"'It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good,'" said Phil, looking at Christie, who was walking toward them. "All the new fellows will like the arrangement."

"And Whitehouse will like it too. He wont have half so much preaching to do, we shall be so remarkably good now," observed Bonner.

"I think certainly it is a good thing for all of us except poor Dabney," returned Whitehouse. "The little boys will be much happier, while the big fellows will find that there are plenty of amusements left them quite as agreea-

ble, and a good deal more harmless than making others wretched."

"Where are you going?" shouted Phil as his cousin turned a sharp angle on recognizing him and his companions. "What a forlorn-looking creature you are, prowling about by yourself! We are going to the woods; come on."

Christie's face brightened at this invitation, for he was feeling as forlorn as he looked, and was just going to say he would be very glad to join them, when he heard Bonner whisper,

"Hold your tongue, Phil, we don't want him; one saint at a time, if you please."

"He shall go, too," answered Phil.

But Christie declined to be thrust upon the party, and started off on a solitary stroll. He met two boys, arm-in-arm, laughing gayly together as they trudged along, and involuntarily wished he had a companion also.

After awhile, however, he enjoyed his walk, even though he was alone; for he had a strong love of the beautiful, and the loveliness of the scenes through which he passed had power to banish all unpleasantnesses from his thoughts as effectually as any living companion could have

done. Roaming through the fields, now stopping to gather a handful of orchids, then idly chasing a glittering dragon-fly, or lying down to rest on the soft green moss while he watched the shadows and the clouds, the time sped so swiftly that it was almost dark before he reached home.

Hurrying through the halls to reach the dormitory in time to prepare for supper he stumbled against something, and barely escaped falling. On investigation, the impediment in the way proved to be a pair of thin legs; but as no other part of the human body was visible they seemed to Christie like supernatural ones, and he was wishing they would pick themselves up and walk off, when he discovered they were the belongings of Dabney, who, concealed from view by the shutter, was sitting on the low window-sill, taking advantage of the last faint streaks of sunlight to read.

"I hope I've not hurt you," said Christie apologetically, as he peered behind the shutter to get a glimpse of his face.

"No," was the laconic answer.

"I beg you will excuse me."

"Yes," said Dabney.

"Are you not afraid of hurting your eyes reading at twilight?"

Dabney shook his head, something as if a fly were buzzing about his ear, and continued his reading.

"Short speech sufficeth
Deep thought to show,
When we with wisdom say,
Yes or no!"

sang a jolly voice.

Christie looked up and down the hall, and at length caught sight of Fish-ball's head, which was protruded to an alarming extent over the balustrade.

"Sociable, is he not?" continued he as Christie ascended the staircase. "He's teacher now, and on his dignity."

"Teacher!" exclaimed Christie in surprise.

"Yes, and there goes the supper-bell. Let's go down and eat to his health in brown bread and apple-sauce," said Fish-ball.

"O dear, I'm afraid I've lost my supper to-night!" cried Christie, looking in dismay at the aspect of his coat, which rolling on the grass had not improved. "Phil says we forfeit it if we are not in the dining-room before grace is

said, and I am sure I cannot make myself presentable so soon."

"O nonsense! you will be there in time. I'll brush your coat, while you pay the same compliment to your hair."

"But my brush, where is my brush?" said Christie.

"Here, take mine," said Bonner, hopping out of the way of the water which Fish-ball, in his zeal to be useful, was splashing right and left as he poured it into Christie's wash-basin.

"You're all right now; you can put on your cloak as you run along; there isn't a moment to spare," said Johnson, appearing to take a most unexpected interest in him.

"What could it mean?" Christie asked himself this question as he was playfully dragged along by his companions. A sudden change seemed to come over the spirit of his dream. He could not understand it, but thought it was very agreeable nevertheless, and hoped it was the beginning of happier times for him. He had very strong social instincts notwithstanding his quiet manner. Having been petted and made much of at home all his life, his spirits were dulled and crushed by the neglect which had

encompassed him since he had been in school; but under the genial, magnetic influence of kindness he became again as merry and light-hearted as of old, and quite electrified Phil by his joyous chatter and gay sallies at the supper-table.

"What a jolly manager I am. It takes me to know which ropes to pull," thought Phil, inwardly complimenting himself in the most lavish manner on the ingenuity with which he had brought about this happy result, without being suspected by Christie as the agent.

Phil certainly did not overestimate his ability. He usually managed to gain his ends, though not always in an unquestionable manner. It had troubled Phil to see his gentle, warm-hearted cousin lonely and desolate. To devote himself exclusively to him was a bore, and Phil did not like to be troubled or bored either; so, though it was unprecedented, he determined that he must be received into his set. To be sure, Christie's unwillingness to join the society was an obstacle, but then it was one which a little shrewdness and management on his part he thought might overcome.

The moment Fish-ball announced that Dabney

was to preside over the dormitory, clothed with the authority of teacher, and thereby do away with hazing, Phil determined to take advantage of it for Christie's benefit; therefore he pointed out to Bonner, Johnson, and two or three others, the gain it would be to them if Christie were a member of their society; saying as there was no opportunity of hazing they would lose nothing, and get a great deal; for Christie "was up to his chin in money," and would furnish capital for no end of "spreads."

Now Phil said this without intentionally lying; indeed, he had great faith in his uncle's wealth and liberality toward Christie, and very naturally desired that his friends should be made acquainted with the comfortable state of things. To further that end, and inspire the degree of respect he considered due to so near a relative, he had recourse to wonderful stories, indulging in two of his favorite propensities, bombast and exaggeration, without a thought of the sinfulness of so doing; for, instead of terming it by the ugly epithet telling lies, he was pluming himself upon his cleverness in making things sound so grandly.

The fact of the case was, that though Christie's

father had by no means the wealth which Phil represented, yet he was a rich man; but being a conscientious one as well, he regarded his possessions not only as a blessing, but as a responsibility, not to be squandered in gratifying idle whims, but as the means of helping the destitute and of alleviating suffering. He had striven to inculcate in his son the same philanthropic views, and early taught him, in a measure, the value of money, the sin of hoarding it, the responsibility of spending it wisely and beneficently; and though Christie had always been in the habit of having money at his disposal, the sums were never large, and always were accounted for.

The boys, as Phil supposed, were enchanted with the picture which his fertile imagination drew, in which Christie, as a member of the society, furnished the money for all possible and impossible "larks;" and it was unanimously agreed among them that he must be made to join them.

"Christie isn't the sort of fellow to be bullied or forced into the society, but he can be cajoled or coaxed to do most any thing," said Phil, which proved that he understood his cousin's

weakness, and took advantage of it oftener than was kind or generous; and upon this occasion, notwithstanding the conversation he had had with him upon the subject, he did not despair that he should have it all his own way after awhile.

CHAPTER VI.

Dr. Grimshaw's Request.

AS has been said, Christie was very happy at being the object of kind consideration and pleasant attentions. His heart swelled with gratitude and praise to God for all his manifold blessings. It seemed so strange that he was crowned with loving-kindness when he was so very unworthy, and as he remembered how impatiently he bore trifling annoyances, how he had chafed under neglect, he asked himself why he should enjoy all the benefits that prosperity confers, while poor Dabney was thrown upon the world without resources, or one earthly friend to guide or help him.

Christie was mistaken in this particular, for Dabney certainly had a good friend in Dr. Grimshaw, who had the discrimination to see the good there was in him, which so many failed to find, hidden as it was by oddities and

uncouthness. He appreciated his wonderful talents, his perseverance, independence, and invariable truthfulness, and deeply regretted his faults, which greatly impaired his usefulness now, and might in time undermine and destroy all that was beautiful in his character. What Dabney cherished as manliness and ambition, Dr. Grimshaw recognized as ugly little sprites called pride and selfishness, and, with a heart full of love and compassion, he determined to do all that a true friend could do to deliver him, if possible, from these, his worst enemies, by inspiring in him an interest in some thing besides himself and his own success in life.

It was about this time that, as Dabney was sitting one evening in Dr. Grimshaw's study translating with his usual glibness a Latin oration from a borrowed book, he suddenly stopped short, and with a great deal of confusion seemed unable to proceed. The Doctor was slowly pacing up and down the room, so familiar with the lesson as to make his corrections without a book.

"Medea, daughter of the king of Colchis," prompted Dr. Grimshaw.

Dabney repeated absently the words, but did not continue.

At such an exhibition of dullness the Doctor stopped his walk, and bending over the back of Dabney's chair, his eyes fell upon the stumbling-block in his pupil's way. It had nothing to do with Medea or the king of Colchis, but was rather a caricature of Dabney, drawn on the margin of the page, representing him in a very tight jacket, standing on the teacher's platform, ferruling, with a gusto, a trembling pupil, who bore a very clever likeness to Christie Randolph. The following doggerel was written underneath:

> "Quoth Pius the Second, O Dabney, quit!
> Don't get so excited, or your coat you'll split;
> For, between you and me, 'tis a very tight fit."

"Whose book is that?" asked Dr. Grimshaw.

"It's Christie Randolph's; but I think he'd hardly caricature himself," answered Dabney.

"And I think he has been too well taught to caricature others," said Dr. Grimshaw. "Some one else has perpetrated that low joke. I cannot think him capable of such meanness; indeed, he greatly interests me. I never met a

more lovely disposition in my whole experience as a teacher. I am afraid the boys take advantage of his good-nature and simplicity. I wish you would have an eye upon him, Dabney."

"I haven't the time, sir. There is his cousin; surely he is the one that should look after him."

"Very true; he is the one that *should* do it, but I should hardly select him for any one's spiritual mentor, and I fear he is the very person most likely to lead him into trouble, for Phil has no steady principle as the basis of a character which might be noble. He always acts from impulse, and has so weakened his moral sense by doing positive wrong in the name of fun that there is no knowing where it may lead him. Christie lacks self-reliance, and is too easily influenced by those he admires; and I fear he may imitate his cousin if there be no counter influence at work. Will you not make an effort to help him to do right?"

"My first duty is to myself," answered Dabney. "I have an education to get, and many duties to perform, and I haven't the time to cultivate friendships which can be of no earthly benefit to me."

"You are mistaken in that particular," continued Dr. Grimshaw earnestly. "Any thing is a benefit to us that can take us from ourselves and teach us sympathy with others. As you say, your first duty is to yourself; but you must not forget the culture of your moral as well as of your intellectual faculties. Ambition is desirable, but beware lest it degenerate into selfishness."

The rich color dyed Dabney's cheeks and brow; the book seemed to dance before his eyes, and he could hardly command the tremor in his voice as he answered,

"Suppose no one cares for my friendship; suppose I am only capable of exciting contempt for my poverty and awkwardness, or at best, pity, in the breasts of my companions. I don't want friends; I can do without them; they would hinder me if I had them. I only want an education; when I have that I am the equal of any one; until then I am willing to wait; indeed, I prefer it." And he turned impatiently to his lesson, as if to put an end to the conversation.

The excitement under which he had spoken had spent itself; but this little glimpse of his

inner life revealed a depth of feeling certainly incompatible with his usual indifferent demeanor.

Gently the good Doctor showed him the sinfulness of indulging such feelings of morbid sensitiveness and wounded pride, and the injury he was doing himself by cultivating such habits of reserve, which, formed in youth, he would never be able to overcome. "Moreover," he continued, "no person, however situated, is exempt from social duties; for we are bidden to 'rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."' And he tried to exact a promise that, as a personal favor to himself, he would be a friend to his young favorite; but he thought it was more to dismiss the subject than from any impression his words had made that Dabney at last consented to try and feel an interest in Christie, and serve him if he could.

CHAPTER VII.

Sunday.

"IS that you, Phil? Why, you look so fine I didn't know you," said Christie as his cousin met him one Sunday morning equipped for church.

"Rather a doubtful compliment that; as much as to say I don't look like myself when I am clean. Well, Dr. Grimshaw explained the laws of gravity for your benefit the other evening, so perhaps you can understand the affinity which draws dirt and ink to my fingers. I have taken great pains with my toilet this morning, however, for I am going to have some fun in church to-day, aping Lawton, the exquisite."

"I wouldn't do it in church," said Christie with the timidity he always displayed in opposing Phil.

"I say, Chris, don't preach, but tell me honestly, do I look as tall and dandified as Lawton?"

Christie hated to dampen the ardor of Phil's new-born zeal for cleanliness by saying no, for it had often occurred to him that if Phil would pay a little more attention to dirty finger-nails, muddy boots, curly locks, and such small matters, it would add much to his personal attractions. In fact, Phil seemed to have no more idea that order was heaven's first law, than a scratching hen, and scattered dirt and confusion as ruthlessly around him. In certain quarters, among his aunts, nice orderly ladies, this sad proclivity had made him by no means popular, and something of a terror; and Christie, more than once, had been distressed to hear his idolized cousin designated as that "unmitigated nuisance," or "troublesome boy, Phil Spencer." If that irrepressible youth were present, these appellations were returned by some disrespectful answer; and Christie had always been impressed with the idea that his cousin would get on much better in the "mansion on the hill," as Phil termed his aunt's residence, if he were a little more orderly; therefore he expatiated upon his present becoming attire, even allowing that by the aid of a footstool he might look as *tall* as Lawton.

"Not that I care, as a usual thing, how I look," was Phil's rather discouraging reply, "but, you see, Lawton has been making extraordinary exertions this morning to dazzle, in his cream-colored suit, which hardly ever sees the light of day except upon public Saturdays or some school exhibition. The fellows all crowded around him as if he were a puppet-show, admiring his clothes, his height, and distinguished manners. I couldn't help laughing at the last puff, for, between you and me, I always thought his manners silly. I told Whitehouse so, who was quite horrified, and asserted that they were inimitable. Inimitable, indeed! Well, he'll find that I can imitate them, as you shall see." And Phil drew himself up defiantly.

"Whitehouse wont look at you if you ape Lawton during service," returned Christie. "The church is God's temple, Phil, and it seems like profaning it to carry unholy, irreverent thoughts there. It was only this morning I was reading a whole chapter in Exodus descriptive of the tabernacle; and I couldn't help thinking that if God was so minute in his directions to Moses concerning his sanctuary,

what purity and holiness he must require in the hearts of his worshipers!"

"Dear me! how much fun you lose by being religious!" exclaimed Phil.

"What I lose in fun, as you call it, is abundantly made up to me in true enjoyment. Don't you imagine it is pleasant and joyful to feel that the greatest Being in the universe is my friend?"

"Yes; but where are you going?" asked Phil; for by this time they had reached the church, and Christie was starting to walk up the opposite aisle from the one which led to the pew they usually occupied together.

"I am going to sit in Dr. Grimshaw's pew to-day," answered Christie; "I am afraid I shall be unable to fix my attention upon the service if I sit with you."

"You shall do no such thing," said Phil, catching hold of his arm and wheeling him round. "I wont interfere with you in any way; you're not obliged to look at me, you know, just because we sit together."

"But it isn't right, I know it isn't," answered Christie, struggling to free himself from Phil's tight grasp.

"Don't let us have a scuffle in the vestibule. There is Grim coming," whispered Phil insidiously.

Disliking to make a scene, Christie, though he demurred, followed his cousin up the aisle, saying to himself that really he "couldn't help it," when he must have known that by a little decision he could sit where he chose.

Lawton, according to an appointment with Phil, joined them before the service commenced, and Christie, as he had feared, found it difficult to turn his thoughts in the direction suited to the place and hour. The first hymn of praise was being sung before he once raised his eyes toward his cousin. He did so just in time to see him leaning languidly against the pew, one arm behind him holding the hymn-book, while with half-shut eyes he sang, in tone and manner so like Lawton's that the boys sitting near him knew at once whom he was imitating, and, forgetful that the eyes of a jealous God were upon them, were shaking with laughter; and Christie, after one or two fruitless efforts to keep his thoughts heavenward, gave up trying, and became as much interested as the rest.

Phil was very much elated with his success,

and looked triumphantly at Whitehouse, who, with all simplicity and reverence, was following the service. Fearing that he did not notice him, Phil stood upon the foot-stool, and with a manner as foreign to his usual demeanor as it was natural to Lawton, he bent over the pew and passed him his hymn-book. In leaning over, however, he lost his balance, and fell to the floor with a terrible clatter.

This accident occasioned a disturbance, of course, annoying those who were really trying to worship God in spirit and in truth, while by Phil's more frivolous companions it was regarded as a joke at his expense, and was made the occasion of much undue levity.

"I say, Phil," whispered Fish-ball as they were going out of the church, "how well you did the exquisite; quite cut out Lawton, didn't you?"

Which observation Phil, who knew that Fish-ball referred to his awkwardness, did not answer with his usual vivacity. In fact, it was noticed afterward that he never did enjoy any remarks upon this subject.

"I am provoked with myself for being so clumsy," said Phil to Christie as they saun-

9252 Phil's Misfortune.

In leaning over, however, he lost his balance, and fell to the floor with a terrible clatter.—Page 86.

tered down the village street toward the school.

"We ought to blame ourselves for our foolish, irreverent behavior in church," thought Christie, who by this time realized that the opportunity of being sanctified and bettered by an hour's communion with God had been lost. Uncomfortable and dissatisfied with himself, he walked awhile in silence; at length he said, "We have lost our whole morning; suppose we have church by ourselves, out under the trees, this afternoon, before evening service. I have a prayer-book, a collection of sermons, and Watts's hymns."

"Done," answered Phil; "I shall be ready."

But when the hour arrived Christie found him in no condition to keep the appointment; for, having been joked and taunted by some of the boys concerning his late achievement, he turned upon his deriders and dealt them a few masterly strokes with his fist which called forth such loud howls from the besieged that it was not difficult to trace the spot from whence the noise proceeded, and brought to the belligerent's heels Dr. Grimshaw and a couple of the under teachers.

Phil was sent ignominiously to bed, conscious

that he merited the punishment Christie was in the school-room, and knew nothing of the fracas until he sought Phil to fulfill his engagement.

"Never mind," said he, after hearing his cousin's version of his ill treatment by the boys; "I have my books with me, and we can just as well read here as under the trees, and perhaps more comfortably."

"You're a good-natured soul, and that's a fact," answered Phil; "but suppose we let the church slide this afternoon; I don't care to be caught by the fellows doing up my piety; it might not seem consistent after having just given two of them a good thrashing. Glad I did it, for they deserved it," continued he, growing angry again at the thought of his grievances; "besides, I hate a prig, so go it in '*Frank Wildman's Adventures.*' I have just got to the place where he is captured by the savages. Fire away, Christie."

"No, I shall not read that to-day," replied he with a decision which, if oftener exercised, would have saved him many a sorrowful hour. "It is not a proper story for Sunday. I have misspent my morning, and now, as far as

possible, I must make it up. I wont compel you to listen to me, though ; I can just as well read to myself."

"I would like to have you read aloud ; but the boys," suggested Phil.

"O if that is what you mind," said Christie, "they shall know nothing about it. Dabney is the only one in the room besides ourselves, and, as usual, he is too much interested in his own book to notice what other people are doing. If any one else comes in, of course I can stop reading."

"Well, proceed," said Phil, making himself comfortable among the pillows, fully determined to listen or not as it suited him. Disliking above all things to be alone, he was very well pleased with this arrangement as the surest means of keeping Christie with him. Christie had read aloud a great deal at home, and, from much practice, read very pleasantly. His voice was sweet and well modulated, his enunciation clear and distinct, and he had not that utter disregard of punctuation which makes it such a difficult task to follow so many youthful readers. It seemed very soothing and delightful to Phil, who, with half-closed eyelids and dreaming

accents, bade him "go ahead" as often as he stopped to turn a leaf or gain breath.

But this state of things was not to last, for a rumor was afloat below stairs "that Spencer was uncommonly touchy concerning his accident, and had fought two terrible battles with Briggs and Greene, in which he had got worsted, and was afterward sent to bed by Dr. Grimshaw." This precious item of intelligence was like a whiff of fresh air in August to Bonner, who, lying flat on his back upon one of the hall benches, had been wickedly complaining that there was no excitement going on, not even a game of football, just because it was Sunday.

"Here's luck; something to keep us from stagnation!" he exclaimed on hearing the news. "I'm off to have some fun!" And he bounded up stairs, two steps at a time, followed by two or three others, who gloried in a row, because it offered them amusement, selfishly indifferent whether or not they caused a brother to sin.

"Spencer is a tragic one when he once gets roused, so look out for breakers; he'll pitch in right royally if you give him time," said one, fully intending to excite his anger by breaking his small wit upon him.

Christie sat curled up at the foot of the bed, his chin resting on his knees and his book before him, when he was interrupted in his reading by Phil, who, looking wildly at him, as if they were engaged in a most disgraceful occupation, whispered,

"Some one is coming. Hide the books, Christie, quick, under the sheets here."

"Hallo there, Spencer, what are you hiding?" exclaimed Bonner, entering the room just in time to discover that something was whisked out of sight. "Why are you in bed at this time of the day? Resting after your morning exertions? O Philly, Philly, what a low bow you did make! I assure you it impressed all beholders."

"Ha, ha," laughed Fish-ball. "He stooped to conquer, but a little, just a little too far."

"Wont you favor me with a few lessons in deportment?" suggested another of his tormentors.

"Let me alone," said Phil. "I'm in bed because old Grim sent me here for fighting Briggs and Greene; but I am ready to fight the rest of you if you don't keep still." And having delivered himself of this speech, he

fell back upon his pillow and shut his eyes, as if about to take a nap.

The boys, delighted to find one usually so good-natured in a mood so susceptible of being vexed, were by no means disposed to allow him the privilege of going to sleep, but continued to teaze him till, in a furious passion, he jumped out of bed and gave chase to his tormentors. Another fight might have ensued, to the great delectation of all the bystanders, with the exception of Christie, who, distressed at the scene he was witnessing, and really afraid somebody would get hurt, begged and implored them to stop ; but as no one heeded his entreaties, he looked about for some means more potent of quelling the disturbance. His eyes lighted upon Dabney, who seemed as unconscious of the noise and confusion as if all was serene.

"I wonder he don't put a stop to this! He is teacher now," thought Christie as he went up to him, and pointed out the proceedings which were taking place almost under his nose.

Dabney was any thing but pleased at the interruption. He was proving to himself a demonstration in Euclid, the rules were work-

ing beautifully, the figures coming out right, though upon every previous occasion when he had tried to produce the like result he had failed. He must leave this delightful occupation and part a couple of frantic boys. "Why on earth," he thought, "if they liked to behave like savages or wild beasts, couldn't they do so, and I be left in peace;" therefore it was in no gracious mood that he received Christie's appeal, for as the disturbance was pointed out to him, of course he could no longer ignore it.

"Quit that noise, and stop fighting," said he, getting up at length, and speaking in an authoritative tone.

But Dabney had too long been regarded merely as a scholar to command ready obedience as teacher, and the two angry boys took no notice of his words until he dashed between them, and, with a strong grasp, held them at arms-length.

"Spencer, go back to bed," commanded he.

Phil glared at his opponent, but observing that Dabney was not to be trifled with, and fearing being brought again before Dr. Grimshaw, skulked off.

"What's this?" said Dabney sharply pick-

ing up a card from the floor near Phil's bed. "Who has been playing with this?"

No one answered the question, but the boys all looked inquiringly at each other, and it was observed that Christie's face grew very red and troubled.

"Does this card belong to you?" asked Dabney of him.

Christie's first impulse was to deny all previous knowledge of its existence, for he felt sure that he should only bring suspicion upon himself or Phil by confessing what he knew concerning it; he thought he might parry the question by saying that he never had owned a pack of cards in his life, but it would be intentional deceit, and how could he be guilty of that with the words of the sermon still ringing in his ear: "It is easy to deceive ourselves and imagine prevarication or deception harmless, whereas either is as sinful as lying, and is prompted by the same selfish, cowardly spirit."

"I can explain how it came here," returned Christie, "for I just noticed it in a book of sermons which I have been reading aloud to Phil. Somebody left it in my book a long time ago, and I have used it ever since as a marker.

Indeed, we haven't been playing cards, have we, Phil?" he continued, turning to his cousin to confirm his statement.

"No, we have not," said Phil stoutly, looking straight at Bonner, who was vulgarly testifying his disbelief of the story by turning up his nose with his first finger.

"So it was cards you were hiding so cleverly when I came into the room!" said he, and he transferred his fingers to his pockets and commenced to reel with laughter. "That's a good one, but it wont do for this chick. Phil Spencer listening to sermons! tell that to the marines."

Dabney looked doubtfully at his pupils; listening to sermons did not seem compatible with Phil's tastes, and he wished, as long as he had been in the room all the time, he had noticed what the cousins were doing.

"O, do believe me!" said Christie, catching hold of his arm in an agony of entreaty.

Dabney looked into the truthful, sensitive face so near his own, and the almost-forgotten words of Dr. Grimshaw occurred to his mind: "The boys take advantage of his simplicity and good-nature; be a friend to him, Dabney."

"I do believe you," said he, turning off to his

beloved Euclid again; but unaccountably the problem had lost its charm; his thoughts wandered off from the subject in the most unusual and distracting manner. A subtile something seemed to suggest that it was not exactly right for him to study on Sunday. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work," whispered Conscience.

"Nonsense," reasoned he, "it is my first duty to get an education. What an idiot I should be to stop studying, just because that boy has been reading a sermon! It is right and proper that he should do so, but I have something else to do, a career to make, and nothing to help me but my own strong will. Queer, Spencer should listen to a sermon, but then they say he is very fond of his cousin;" and somehow the thought stole into his mind that it might be very pleasant to be sure of such love and unbounded admiration as Christie gave Phil; that there might be other prizes in life worth gaining besides an education; that, as the Doctor had implied, the course he was pursuing was making him hard and selfish; he

was living for himself, entirely for himself. Then he tried to shake off the impression, murmuring that it was all the effect of being mixed up with the boys ; and he longed for the old life again, when no one had a right to require any thing more of him than to learn his lessons and recite them ; and in envying the lot of those more fortunate than himself, the hours rolled on until the bell rang for afternoon service.

Although Dabney's whole heart rebelled at his rough path through life, God's purpose remained unchanged ; unerring Wisdom had planned it, untiring love had executed it. It was a rugged road, perhaps, but it could lead him better than any other to heaven. Little by little, the knowledge of this came to him, but not yet.

It was part of his duty to see that the little boys got off to church in good order. As he marshaled his little force, and walked up the village street toward the church, he was unconscious of a pair of loving eyes that watched his movements with genuine interest. He might be rude and awkward, but Christie thought he should never dislike him again. Had he not be-

lieved his word when appearances were against him, and silenced his accusers by saying so? Appreciative of kindness at any time, he was never more grateful for it than now, when he was so lonely in the little world in which he dwelt. Then, too, Dabney seemed so forsaken and poor that his sympathies were roused in his behalf, and he realized for the first time what a trial those new duties of his must be to him, since they took him so much from his studies.

"If I could only help him!" he thought. Had Dabney been a whit less cold and reserved, Christie perhaps would have run to him and offered, off-hand, his time, the contents of his gorgeous new pocket-book, or any thing else that could be of use to him. As it was, he wisely concluded not to offend his pride, but to watch for an opportunity for being of real service to him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Unpretentious Kindness.

WHEN people are sincerely desirous of serving others, the opportunity sooner or later is sure to present itself; and Christie, who now kept a sharp look-out upon Dabney's movements, saw many ways in which he might be of use to him if only he were less timid himself, or Dabney more sociable and friendly. But Christie was setting his life daily to the pattern of Christ, and with his heart aglow with his love, he could not fail to benefit those about him. He did not know that by refusing to join in the many laughs indulged in by the boys at the expense of Dabney's clumsiness and awkwardness in the grammar-class over which he presided, or that by his uniformly gentle and respectful manner, in such contrast to the others, he had helped and comforted him in a way most congenial to his proud and chafed spirit. Like many another, Christie made no account of those little acts of thought-

fulness, which, after all, affect one's happiness as surely as more pretentious kindness.

One morning, a few weeks later, Christie, with his hands in his pockets, was leisurely sauntering up and down the plank walk of the play-ground, watching a very exciting game of leap-frog, when he overheard quite a learned discussion carried on by two little fellows, who, sitting on the grass under a tree near at hand, were ostensibly studying their lessons for the morning.

"I tell you, Tommy, you don't know any thing," said young Dickey, with most unnecessary candor; "the State of Virginia is named after Queen Elizabeth. I heard the teacher say so, only yesterday."

"Pooh!" answered Tommy, with offended dignity, "that can't be, for Queen Elizabeth's name is Elizabeth, and not Virginia. Don't believe the teacher ever said so."

"I tell you he did," said Dicky, by no means pleased that the information he had volunteered was not accepted as authentic; "you just ask one of the big boys."

Christie, being appealed to, was forced to say that Dicky was in the right and Tommy in the

wrong; "for though Queen Elizabeth's name was Elizabeth, she was a virgin, and the colony was named Virginia in her honor."

Tommy looked incredulous; he seemed to think the name rather far-fetched, and continued skeptical; so Christie told him he had a nice little book in his desk in the school-room which told all about it, and he would go and get it for him. As good as his word, he was off at once for it. Upon opening the school-room door he was almost stifled by a heavy cloud of dust, which half concealed and half revealed the tall figure of Dabney, who, with a red bandanna on his head, was making the most frantic movements with a broom. It was plain to be seen he was no adept at sweeping, for such a frisking and rushing about, dashing hither and thither with no perceptible object save to raise dust and general confusion, was never seen before.

"He will never get through in time," thought Christie, sincerely pitying the ludicrous-looking object, all arms and legs, using the broom to so little purpose, and longing, he knew, to be at his books again. "That isn't the way to hold a broom," he at length ventured to say.

But no attention whatever was paid to his remark.

"Let me take it a moment, and I'll show you the professional way," he added in as jolly and pleasant a tone as he could command.

Dabney stopped brandishing the broom, and rested on the handle of it as he surveyed Christie; the perspiration was running from his face, and he looked quite used up with his exertions.

"You are in my way," he answered in panting incoherency; "go off."

Had Christie been actuated by any motive save that of pure benevolence he would have been disgusted by this uncivil answer, and have left him as he deserved; but being desirous of obeying the Bible injunction, "Bear ye one another's burdens," he persevered, saying that he should not be in the way, and only wished to help him; and before Dabney could object was off, presently returning, however, with a broom. It was not a very promising affair, being almost worn down to a stump; but as it was all he could find, he went to work with great briskness.

"It seems pleasant and home-like to be sweeping again," said Christie; "I like it. You see, old Tim taught me, and I understand the business. He's our man, and I used to help him sweep the stable at home every day when I was a little chap, and in return he told me stories. Tim tells uncommonly jolly ones, all about ghosts, fiends, witches, and such nice subjects. He's a Scotchman. Don't you like the Scotch?"

Christie asked this question more to discover if Dabney were listening than from any other object. As Dabney bowed his head, Christie went on in the most engaging manner, and had about finished sweeping the room when, to his surprise, Dabney suddenly drew himself up and spoke as follows:

"I did not ask you to help me. This is my work, and I would rather do it by myself. Please go."

Before he could answer he caught sight of Phil, whose presence, in all probability, had provoked this ungrateful return. At all events Christie thought so, and hoped that Dabney did not notice that his cousin addressed him as "Biddy."

"Did you say you wanted me, Phil?" asked Christie.

"Yes, instantly," returned he.

"Can't come until I have taken up this dirt;" and Christie flourished the dust-pan with the dexterity of a housemaid. "You see, Dabney, this is the place where the skill comes in," said he, shoving the dirt into the pan with a scientific whirl of the broom.

"Come!" sung out Phil impatiently.

"Coming!" said Christie, with a final shake of the broom. Then he ran out of the room with Phil, thinking that at last he had been able to be of use to Dabney. The consciousness of this gave a cheerfulness to his face which would have done one good to see.

"What under the sun have you been about?" inquired Phil, looking with disgust at the dust which covered Christie's jacket.

"Why, I went into the school-room for a book, which, by the way, I forgot to take away with me, and finding Dabney there sweeping, I stopped to help him a little, for I have been thinking for some time what a nuisance all this drudgery must be to him."

"Hold on," interrupted Phil; "don't tell me

you are going to turn housemaid because it is necessary for Dabney to do so! A little more and the boys would have caught you at it. I wouldn't have Bonner see you brandishing that dust-pan so handily for any thing. Where do you suppose he would think you learned that accomplishment?"

"Hush! Dabney will hear you if you talk so loud," said Christie, lowering his voice as he passed under the windows of the school-room. "You will hurt his feelings."

"He hasn't any," laughed Phil. "He is only a machine, and a very poor one at sweeping."

"I know he is very awkward about it," replied Christie, "and that is the reason I want to help him; perhaps I can give him a few hints which may enable him to get through a little sooner. I pity him like every thing," he added in school-boy vernacular.

Phil felt very much inclined to get angry at this new whim, as he called it, of his cousin, but it was a good deal of trouble, and never paid with Christie, so instead he seated himself astride a fence near at hand, and in this impressive attitude gave himself up to the task of arguing him out of it.

"In the first place," said he, "Dabney isn't like any body else. You are only wasting your sweetness, for he doesn't appreciate it."

"I am not so sure of that," answered Christie. "Dabney is odd, and his manner is certainly very dismal, but he may feel more kindly than he appears to; besides, wiser heads than ours think that there is no person in the world who is not made happier by receiving kindness."

"If he be made happier by it you wont gain much," said Phil. "In a school like this it is every boy for himself, and the fellows will naturally think you are toadying him because he is a kind of teacher, and laugh at you for it."

"Why, Phil, I thought you were one of the independent sort, and quite plumed yourself upon your not being biased by the opinions of others," said Christie archly. "You haven't made out much of a case yet. Are these all the objections you can muster?"

Phil stopped digging the ground with the long stick he held in his hand to consider, and then, brightening up, suggested that it made people dirty to sweep.

At which remark Christie could not help

smiling, and looked rather drolly at Master Phil's hands, which appeared sadly in need of a little soap at this moment.

"Well," answered Phil, somewhat annoyed that the discrepancy between his preaching and his practice was so apparent, "I suppose 'the pot can't call the kettle black,' to be sure; but I wish you wouldn't be odd, and do so many queer things. It makes it dreadfully hard for me. I want you to be popular with the boys, yet you take so little pains to please them. You might join our society now when you know we all desire it so much, and it is such an unusual compliment to invite you to do so. And I wish you would not do Dabney's house-work, or always wear gloves when you go out for a walk. It's Miss Nancyish. I wouldn't talk so much about Annie or Alice either. The fellows were quizzing you about them last evening, only you didn't know it; and the next time Lawton asks you to fill his pitcher, just take it on the sly to some one smaller than yourself, and make him do it. That's the way I used to manage when they troubled me."

After delivering himself of this advice, "free gratis," Phil got down from the fence and

walked on, thinking the while what a valuable friend he was to Christie, and regretting that no interested person had helped him over the shoals of his first year.

But Christie wasn't so sure that this was a help. He felt that whatever aspirations to do right he might have, Phil was sure to drag them down. Christ had said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And yet in helping Dabney he felt that he should offend Phil. It didn't seem kind or grateful never to heed his advice, or be guided by his wishes, so he hastened to say that since he objected to it he wouldn't sweep again, but he wished he would help him think of some other way whereby he might be of service to Dabney.

"Better buy him a new coat," answered Phil; "he needs it badly enough. The one he wears would scare the crows."

But this suggestion Christie dismissed from his mind as wholly impracticable, for he had not nearly enough money to purchase one, and then again he instinctively felt that Dabney would not accept such a present from him. On thinking over this conversation afterward

he knew that he had been guilty of great weakness in resigning the easiest means of helping him, just because, forsooth, Phil didn't like it, and he felt disheartened at his own want of fidelity to a purpose which he knew to be a good one. But a resolute will and a patient heart are not things of spontaneous growth. They come from the grace of God, and are nurtured only by constant effort and unwearying toil. So the faithful soul, laboring in Christ's vineyard, may not despair, but learn wisdom even from failures and disasters.

CHAPTER IX.

Christie Gains a Friend.

NOTWITHSTANDING Christie had promised not to sweep for Dabney, he soon found that there were other ways of showing his good-will toward him. Sometimes he testified it by gathering a few flowers in his walk and laying them without comment upon his desk; and then again by helping one of the little boys with his lesson, that Dabney might have more time for his own, or by lending him a book; for he had observed that, not being able to supply himself with all he required, he had to learn certain lessons during recess and odd hours, when the books were not likely to be wanted by their owners. Thus, in his modest, simple way, he did many and many an act of kindness, occasionally recognized by a gruff "thank you," though oftener even this small courtesy was neglected.

Nevertheless all this thoughtfulness on Chris-

tie's part was not entirely lost. It is doubtful whether kindness ever is. After a time Dabney began to expect these small attentions, and, though Christie did not dream of it, to feel disappointed when they were not forthcoming.

One day Dabney had a particularly trying time. The weather was warm and uncomfortable; the sweeping dragged, and seemed more than commonly laborious; the little boys appeared more than usually stupid and distracting, and it was very late before he could go to his own desk and commence his studies. For the first time in many days Christie's lexicon was not there to greet him, with its inky cover and well-thumbed pages. Tired and disappointed, disgusted with his present life, and distrustful of the future, he went into one of the many recitation rooms to find another one, which he remembered having seen there. The room was deserted, and throwing himself into a chair, he rested his arm upon a neighboring desk, and his head upon his arm, too weary to think. Constant confinement to the schoolhouse, want of out-of-door exercise, and hard study, were beginning to tell upon his health.

He was aroused by a gentle hand laid upon his shoulder, and a kindly voice inquiring, "What is the matter?"

On looking up he beheld Christie, lexicon in hand. Irritated at being caught in such a despondent attitude, he impatiently shook his head, but seeing the hurt expression in Christie's tell-tale face, he held out his hand abruptly, and asked the reason why he always exhibited so much consideration and kindness toward him? "Is it because you pity me?"

Surprised at the question, the color flashed into Christie's face as he answered,

"I suppose it is because I have wanted to gain your friendship, you were once so kind to me."

It was now Dabney's turn to feel surprise, and it was some time before Christie could recall to his mind the circumstances relating to the card.

"And what do you think your cousin Phil would say to such a friend as you now propose to take to yourself?"

"O, as for that, Phil tells me he tried himself last term to make friends with you, only you wouldn't let him."

Dabney laughed a bitter laugh, and one that pained Christie to hear.

"He ought to have said that he tried to patronize me; the pompous, conceited little donkey!"

"Phil isn't pompous or conceited," said Christie excitedly; "he never patronized any one!"

"Hasn't he?" returned Dabney with a smile. "I have been of the opinion that he patronized you every day of his life."

"That proves that you don't know him. O, Phil Spencer is the best fellow in the world!" And there is no knowing how long Christie would have stood there, loud in his cousin's praises, if Dabney with a playfulness quite new to him had not pushed him off and told him to go to work.

"You are not sick?" inquired Christie, looking into his pale face and sunken eyes.

"O no, merely a little tired. Run along."

But the pain in his back and limbs, the throbbing of his head, and the weakness and languor from which he suffered, all apprised him that he was something more than a little tired; and though he managed to drag himself about for some days longer, he at length frightened

the little boys by fainting as he was hearing a recitation. A serious illness followed, not dangerous, but tedious and painful.

By suffering is wrought out in people, sometimes, the power of loving and of appreciating their blessings; and so it was with Dabney. As he tossed on his sick-bed day after day he had plenty of time for reflection, and he could not but feel that, somehow, his life had been miserably misspent, and no one could reasonably regret it if he should be taken away. A spirit of gratitude was awakened within him toward all who showed any interest in him, and to none more so than toward Christie, whose knock was always heard at his door just after school-hours. At first his visits were short and formal; but by degrees they lengthened, and became a great pleasure to both, cheering and comforting Dabney, while Christie derived an equal benefit from them. They taught him the invaluable lesson, that we should not hastily judge those whose exteriors are not prepossessing. As the acquaintance ripened, and he came to understand Dabney better, he found many palliative and extenuating circumstances which softened in a degree his faults.

Many noble qualities came to light, too, which formerly he did not dream he possessed, and so at length he learned to admire as well as pity him.

These were happy days to Christie, for although the boys joked him a great deal concerning his selection of an intimate, still it was done good-naturedly, and he could but see that he had pleased Dr. Grimshaw greatly in gaining the confidence of his strange pupil; but, better than this, he had won the approval of his own conscience. We cannot do right without carrying within us this certain reward.

There was only one drawback to his happiness. Master Phil, looking with rather jealous eyes upon this newly-hatched friendship, as he called it, gave vent to his displeasure in sundry jocose remarks upon Dabney's appearance, which were by no means pleasant for Christie to hear.

"If he only dressed like other people he would not look so awkward," Christie had said.

The remark seemed to amuse Phil, for he laughed very heartily, and replied that "if Dabney were only dressed up to the handle,

he didn't doubt that he would make a perfect exquisite."

But Christie's faith in a new coat remained unaltered. He wondered if Dabney knew how much he had outgrown the one he had been wearing, and if he really could not afford to purchase another.

CHAPTER X.

Dabney's Story.

HIS doubts on this subject were soon set at rest, for on going to Dabney's room one morning he found him already up and trying to dress. Since his illness he had occupied a little room by himself, and in it he and Christie had many a long talk.

"Are you going to wear this jacket?" said Christie as he tried to assist him to put on the objectionable garment.

"It is this or none," answered Dabney, tugging away to get his arms through the sleeves. "I have been congratulating myself since I have been sick, and grown so thin, that when I got up again I should fit the jacket, since it has refused to fit me. O dear," he added, sitting down on the side of the bed to rest, "somehow the old, ugly feeling comes back with the old, ugly jacket. O Christie, you don't know how wicked I used to feel when I was down stairs among the boys; so discontented

with my lot, so angry and rebellious. My only happy hours were those spent in study; then I forgot my troubles, and was unmindful of surrounding boobies, who, to speak the truth, are as scant of brains as I am of broadcloth;" and Dabney gave a spiteful little twitch at his sleeve in the vain endeavor to make it cover a very shabby wristband.

"Whom do you mean by the 'boobies'?" asked Christie.

"Why, all the boys; there isn't one of them that has common sense."

"You can't mean that they are fools," answered Christie.

"I suppose almost every body has common sense; but precious few use it, so it all comes to the same thing as if they hadn't it. You are the only boy in this school who can like a person for his own sake."

"You are mistaken," replied Christie earnestly, remembering the conversation he had with his mother the evening before he left home. "Our companions make a pretty fair estimate of our character, and what is good in us they like. No one can help liking what is lovely, you know."

"Then I must be very ugly, for no one likes me," said Dabney with a grim smile.

"I don't know how you can judge whether you are liked or not, for you wont give any one the chance of knowing you."

"It is because I am sure the boys would be ashamed of the acquaintance that I withhold it. I know that I am plain, shabby, and awkward. I feel it every moment I am with the boys; I deplore it when I am away from them, for, though I am proud, I am not vain. Vanity I despise."

O blind, blind Dabney! He thought he knew his own heart; he flattered himself that vanity, and an overweening love of self, had no part in it; he imagined that he could foster and cherish a baneful pride, and be free from all the evils that follow in its train. Let us not deceive ourselves; one sin unrestrained is sure to pave the way for others, and if we would be exempt from all those vices we most despise, we must root out and fling from us all our darling sins and corrupt inclinations. It was wounded vanity which kept Dabney aloof from the other boys, and fired him with an insatiable ambition; it was the littleness of pride which made him

shrink from all those who might consider him their inferior.

"Don't look so distressed, Christie," said Dabney, reading in his friend's face the real sorrow he felt. "I am going to cultivate a better spirit; at least, I shall try to. If the boys were only like you it would not be so hard."

"Have you always been so—" Here Christie hesitated.

"Out with it; been so what?"

"Well, different from other boys," continued Christie.

"I don't know; I suppose when I was a little chap I was very much like the rest of them; but ever since I have been old enough to make comparisons I've been discontented and wretched. I must have been young when it first dawned upon me that my home, somehow, was different from other homes. We were very poor, but in that respect not unlike our neighbors; but while they all took it good-naturedly and as a matter of course, poverty was the cause of abject misery with us.

"My father was a poor invalid, querulous and fretful in the extreme, and regarded us children,

my sister Rose and myself, as unmitigated nuisances. He used to say we were a perfect drag upon him, and kept him poor, and was always tormenting mother to give us away, send us to the orphan asylum, bind us out to service, or get rid of us, he didn't seem to care much how; but mother clung to us; I think we were her only comfort. The saddest, most broken-down woman you ever saw was my mother. My father complained that she was a wreck, and used to tell very wonderful stories of her former beauty, which bewitched him into running away with her; and then he would fall to cursing his romantic folly, and wishing she were back with her father again; though how he could have lived without her I don't think he saw clearly himself.

"Mother had been brought up very delicately, and, not being strong, made poor headway at supporting us all. As things got worse and worse, my father talked more and more about giving us away, and finally, as there seemed a fair chance of our starving, in an agony of grief she consented.

"I shall never forget the day we were taken off. I suppose it was to some sort of an asylum,

any way to a big house, where there were a great many people who looked at us, and talked about us as if we had no ears. Each one shook his head or laughed at me, and all agreed that I was the queerest looking little biped, or the plainest little monkey, they ever saw, and wondered if my face didn't ache from sheer ugliness. One facetious lady pointed her parasol at me, I remember, and declared I was perfectly fascinating, and when she was asked what she meant, she replied that I fascinated her like a snake, really she couldn't keep her eyes off me. At which witticism they all laughed.

"To make a long story short, no one wanted such a plain child. I don't know whether I was most glad or sorry. Though people do not always think so, it is quite as unpleasant for a child as a grown person to know they are frightful; perhaps even more so, as they cannot realize, like their elders, the truth of that homely old adage, 'Handsome is that handsome does.' However, I was glad that I need not leave my mother.

"O how much I did love her!" said Dabney, relapsing into the broken accents of real, deep feeling, while a soft light stole over his counte-

ance and altered the whole expression of his features, till Christie could hardly believe it was the same person.

"And did you lose your sister?" inquired Christie with great interest.

"Yes; every one admired her as heartily as they were disgusted or amused by me. She was a dear little creature, as beautiful as a sunbeam, and as affectionate as she was beautiful. When one of the ladies asked her if she would go to ride in her splendid carriage with her and be her little girl, she put one little arm around my neck and the other round mother's, saying, 'Dis mamma good enough for Wosy. Wosy don't want to wide unless Wobby can wide too.'

"But they took her off, after having exacted a promise from mother that she would never visit her. I never shall forget that beast of a man, who declared that mother ought to be ashamed to cry when her child would have every thing in the world which money could buy. As if money were the only thing one wanted!

"I believe my father actually hated me when he found I was such an ugly little wretch that no one would have me, and scolded mother, as

if she were to blame for it, until I was so ashamed of my face that I hardly dared to look at any one except mother, who used to take me on her lap, and say she was glad I was plain, and she believed God had made me so that she might keep me with her to comfort her. The words seemed to burn into my little heart, and I would often go off by myself to think what I could do to help her.

"One day I was cogitating over our troubles when it occurred to me for the first time that mother might go to her father for assistance. Brilliant idea! Why had no one thought of it before? I was quite delighted with my own cleverness, and ran to disclose it at once. It was something of a damper when I was told that my mother had both written to him and visited him, but all to no purpose. He was too angry to forgive her. I asked if I might go and try my luck with him; but mother only shook her head, and assured me it would be of no use, and advised me to think no more about it.

"But I did think of it, especially in the night, while tossing, tumbling, and fretting myself almost into a fever over the troubles which my par-

ents discussed during the day, until at last I made the bold resolve to go on my own responsibility. I was sure I could make my grandfather listen to me, I should plead my mother's case so well; and then I had glorious visions of his forgiving, helping, and loving her, and our all living together in comfort and splendor to the end of our days, just as they do in the story books.

"I took Tommy Magee into my confidence, and asked him to help me find my grandfather's house, which I knew to be at the other end of the town. Tommy lived on the floor above us. He was in the newspaper business, and knew all about the city, consequently was quite looked up to by the boys in the neighborhood. The first time I discussed the matter with him he pulled down the corners of his eyes with his hands and ran out his tongue, I suppose to express the hopelessness of the enterprise; but I promised him no end of marbles if I was successful—real *bona fide* agates, for which I knew he had a great fondness; so at last he consented to go with me, and we were to start early the following week.

"As the day drew near I became nervously

alive to the fact that no extenuating circumstances justified me in acting in direct opposition to the expressed wishes of my mother; but I knew nothing of patience, or a trust in the divine Will which shapes our destinies. I thought to take the whole thing in my own hands, and so, regardless of right or truth, I told my parents I was going with Tommy to help him sell his papers, and set forth on my delicate mission.

"I had spared no pains to make myself presentable, and was much pleased with the temporary effect which soaking my head in a tub of water had produced upon my hair, persuading myself that my grandfather would never imagine its original color to be red. As a special token of his good-will, Tommy lent me his big green breastpin, which I put on with great complacency. Notwithstanding these two gratifying circumstances, I was quite depressed in spirits as I gave a hurried glance at myself in the little piece of glass which hung on the wall in Tommy's bedroom, together with various pictures, cut from pictorial papers which wouldn't sell. The words 'queer-looking little biped, and ugly little monkey' rang

their changes in my ears. I mustered up courage to ask Tommy if he thought I would do, which modest question he answered with engaging frankness, saying that I wasn't exactly the sort of chap that would make a grandfather hanker to claim me, yet not such a dreadful-looking youngster either.

"I was very tired by the time we reached the street in which my grandfather lived. The houses looked so grand and imposing that my courage utterly failed me, and it quite took my breath away when Tommy stopped before one of them, and asserted that it was my grandfather's. Tremblingly I rang the bell at the area door; but, taking us for beggars, we were sent away with such dispatch that even Tommy, the dauntless, had not time to lift his voice in protestation. Rather crestfallen, we sat down on the curbstone and talked the matter over. Tommy was for "pushing the thing through," as he termed it, while I was for giving up and going home. It was not until he had artfully put forward the chances that I might yet live in that magnificent house, with a pony to drive, and plenty to eat, that I agreed to make another effort to further that end.

"At this juncture a young man came out of the house, and Tommy, marching boldly up to him, inquired if Mr. Leonard, my grandfather, were within, saying that he wished to see him on business. The young man told us that he was at his office, giving us the address.

"So we started off again, and easily found the place, away down in the business part of the city. I stood a long time before the building, jostled about by the busy passers, Tommy winding up my courage the while. At last I made a desperate plunge into the office, and asked for Mr. Leonard. A man pointed with his thumb toward an old gentleman seated at a desk engaged in writing. He looked up inquiringly at me as I approached and stood panting before him, helplessly tongue-tied. I had pictured to myself the interview many a time, in which I was very eloquent, telling a very pathetic story, and touchingly asking his forgiveness in my mother's name; but reality always differs from imagination. I assure you I could hardly speak. I don't know how I made him understand who I was; but when I did his anger was something terrible. He called me 'baggage' with low blood in my veins,

and said that I was a hideous little thing, and looked just like my father. Finally I became as angry as he, and, forgetting the respect due to an old gentleman, I told him I would have none of his help if he would give it to me; that I would be a great man yet, and snap my fingers in his face. At which remark he laughed very heartily, and hoped I wouldn't be any more shiftless than my father, assuring me that if he sent me whining to him again he should have me kicked out of the office.

"Well, somehow I got out of that place, and there, on the sidewalk, stood Tommy Magee awaiting me. He seemed somewhat crushed when he found that there was no prospect of marbles, but soon forgot his disappointment in condoling with me. I am afraid we indulged a great many evil thoughts and unchristian wishes on our way home, which harmed us a great deal more than they did my grandfather.

"We concluded to say nothing about our exploit to my mother, as it would only make her uncomfortable. I was forced to confess to myself that I had in all probability done more harm than good by my disobedience, and I couldn't help observing to Tommy that I

wished I had asked the advice of some one older and wiser than myself.

"'Didn't you consult me?' inquired he, in a tone of mild correction. 'You just wait until you are President of the United States, and then we'll be even with the old gentleman.'

"So nothing came of my visit to my grandfather but a settled determination on my part to become something great; and though I have rather given up the idea of the Presidency, I am bound to be somebody yet. A short time after this my father died, and my mother opened a boarding-house. Of course, as she had no money or credit it was but a sorry shanty, and our boarders were of the commonest class; but humble people may have kind hearts, and a friend was raised up for us at last in one of the boarders, a coarse, rough man, who pitied my mother, and, seeing what a taste I had for books, offered to pay my tuition at a good school for her sake. My mother was very ambitious for me, and I believe it was the happiest day of her life when she saw that there was a prospect of my getting an education and being a gentleman, as she used fondly to say.

"I came here with but one idea in my head,

and that was to gain knowledge, that I might the sooner be able to take care of her. I wondered greatly, at first, for what object most of the boys left their homes; certainly it could not be to improve themselves, I thought, for they never missed an opportunity of shirking recitations, and spent more time in contriving ingenious means of escaping study than it would take to learn their lessons thoroughly.

"Every vacation, on going home, I found my mother more and more feeble, and as I realized that she was slowly wearing out, I was almost frantic with grief, and begged that I might remain at home and go into the newspaper business with Tommy Magee, or engage in some pursuit which might enable me to be near her. But she had set her heart upon my having the advantage of education, and every term saw me back again, more and more in earnest than ever to learn and get through with school; until study became a habit with me, and I was what the boys call a 'dig.' I grew impatient of any interruption. Any thing but study seemed a waste of time, and yet it was of no avail; before I could be of use to her, my mother died."

Here Dabney's voice trembled, while he hid

his face in his hands and the big tears forced themselves through his thin fingers.

"It seems like such a wasted life, so devoid of happiness, so filled with needless suffering and sorrow," resumed he at length, referring to his mother.

So felt the unthinking boy. Do we not all of us know of lives which seem to be made up entirely of hardships—some who must fain be content with merely looking at the promised land, before they are taken hence to complete in a world beyond the *real* life which was generated by trials, and nurtured by the constant performance of hard duties? Who shall say that these are not the truly blessed? Who shall question the justice of a loving Father?

"Have you no friends?" asked Christie tenderly.

"None whatever, since I lost a few weeks ago the kind soul who so long and generously befriended me."

"What has become of Tommy Magee?"

"O, I have lost sight of him since we moved from his neighborhood."

"Certainly Dr. Grimshaw is your friend," observed Christie.

"He has been very kind to me, it is true," returned Dabney thoughtfully. "You know he gives me my board and tuition for the little I can do for him. I should get along very well if it were not for books and clothes. But there is the school-bell, Christie; I am ashamed of having wasted your time with my futile complaints and gloomy recollections;" and Dabney once more assumed the composed and indifferent manner in which he usually disguised his feelings.

Christie left his friend with a sad heart; he felt so powerless to assist him, so unequal to the task of cheering him. He could only hope that Dabney would carry his troubles to his heavenly Father, for there he would be secure of help and consolation such as no earthly friend could give, there he would find a fountain of love and sympathy never to run dry.

Instead of going to Dabney's room directly after school-hours, as Christie had been wont to do of late, he might have been seen this day escaping from the play-ground, and pacing slowly up and down the shaded path which led through the quiet lawn, deep in cogitation. It ended in his returning to the house, and writing

a long letter. A good deal of paper was wasted, and some hours were consumed in composing this to his entire satisfaction; but at length he sealed the envelope with a sigh of relief, and carried it himself to the post-office, that there might be no delay in its reaching its destination. Then he went about the school for a few days, expectant and happy as might be.

CHAPTER XI.

The Troublesome Letter.

"WHAT has happened?" asked Fish-ball one morning of the boys, who, crowding and jostling each other, were making a grand rush toward the street.

"Nothing more alarming than the arrival of the stage-coach," answered Phil at his elbow. "Come," he added, addressing Christie, "let us go to the post-office and see what is in the mail;" and catching him by the ear he pulled him along.

"Hands off," laughed Christie. "I was going to the office any way, for I am expecting a letter."

"'Letters to me are dearer
Than the loveliest flowers in June,'"

hummed Fish-ball, thinking that at last he had made a grand hit.

"It depends upon what is in them," remarked Phil, who had a vivid recollection of a

document but lately received from his father, which contained a severe reprimand for certain misdemeanors that had but just reached his ears.

"There's Bonner and Whitehouse with the letters," observed Fish-ball. "Behold the leopard and the lamb are walking out together! Suppose we sit down on this bench and wait for them."

There not being room for all three upon the seat in question, Christie threw himself on the ground at Phil's feet, and lazily watched the boys as they approached. Quite a crowd gathered here, and clamorously begged Whitehouse to look over the mail at once and see which of them were favored with letters.

"Here is luck to you, Maxwell," said he, throwing a missive at the little fellow. "A letter for Johnson; two for Briggs; nothing for you, Phil, or for Fish-ball either. Sorry, but can't help it. I believe I have one for Randolph. Yes, here it is;" and he flung it into Christie's lap.

It was the letter he had been expecting, and his face beamed with satisfaction.

"It is from your mother, Chris," said Phil,

recognizing his aunt's handwriting. "Open it quickly, and tell me the news."

"My darling son," read Fish-ball, giving great emphasis to the adjective.

"Stop; it is very impolite to peep over his shoulder," remarked Lawton.

"'Politeness hath its seat in the heart; if not found there, where shall we seek it?'" observed Fish-ball.

Lawton colored. It wasn't exactly pleasant to hear his old composition quoted, but before he could reply a loud whistle from Fish-ball attracted the attention of all the boys. "Just look at this, Christie Randolph!" said he, picking up a ten-dollar bill, which had fluttered from the letter to the ground as Christie turned the page.*

The boys with one accord eyed the money approvingly.

"That's good," observed Bonner. "I say, Randolph, you've got to do the handsome thing by us. You are caught now. We all know you have plenty of money, so there will be no crawling out of your standing treat this time; we wont have any of your favorite three-cent

* See Frontispiece.

pop-corn entertainments, either. Ten dollars will go a good ways."

"You don't suppose I am going to eat up my nice, good money," said Christie, trying to turn off Bonner's suggestion as a joke.

"You sordid fellow! I verily believe you are going to hoard it."

"I shouldn't wonder," laughed he, starting off on a run.

Long before the money was received he had made up his mind to invest it in a way which decidedly interfered with Bonner's appropriation, and fearing lest he should coax it from him, he did not slacken his pace until he was out of sight and hearing of his companions. Then, for the convenience of reading his letter, he sat down on the stump of an old tree by the wayside.

It was just such a letter as he had hoped for: kind, sympathizing, and full of interest in his new friend Dabney, and concluded as follows:

"You can act your own pleasure, Christie, about giving the inclosed money, or a portion of it, to your friend. You will have my full approval in devoting it to so laudable a purpose. Bear in mind, however, that you will

receive no further remittances from home for some time.

"Select your gift judiciously, something that will be useful to him. You can, no doubt, ascertain what he most needs, and exercise delicacy in the presentation of it, lest you wound his feelings. Disregard this caution, and the gift not only loses its value, but becomes a positive burden and mortification. Many worthy people either forget this, or are ignorant of its importance."

Christie read the letter over and over. He could almost have wept for joy at its contents. The only question that perplexed him was, how he could give Dabney a present in the most acceptable manner. As he was revolving the subject in his mind he was attracted by a large shady tree in the meadow just the other side of the wall. It looked cool and pleasant there, and, not wishing to meet any one until he had formed some plan in furtherance of his wishes, he climbed over the wall, and stretched himself on the soft green moss in the shade.

He had already decided to buy a coat for Dabney, as good a one as the money would purchase, and made just like Lawton's. He

tried to imagine him decked in it, when all at once it occurred to him that without a vest the coat would look almost as odd as the old jacket. But how was he to get the vest? Dabney could not afford to buy one, and the ten dollars would barely procure the coat. He took out his pocket-book and counted the money it contained. He found just three dollars in change. It was all the money he had, and he knew that he should not receive any from home for some time, as his letter had informed him. He realized that it would be very uncomfortable not to have a penny by him, yet he decided that it should go with the ten dollars.

In the shelter of his hidden retreat he presently heard the boys as they noisily passed along the road on their way home. They were seeking a certain plant very popular among school-boys on account of its leaves, which are used by them as bladders.

"Hallo! here are plenty of them," exclaimed a voice which Christie recognized as Bonner's. "Who has a knife? You have one, Whitehouse; just help me a bit with these."

Christie distinctly heard the murmur of their

voices on the other side of the wall as they cut the leaves from the stocks and stopped to test a few of them, but he did not notice much what was said until he caught his own name. It was Bonner speaking.

"O yes, Randolph's father is very rich, and Phil tells me he never refuses Christie money. Why, he has heaps of it all the time, and I never knew him to treat us to any thing but pop-corn. Just think of the sneak's running away lest he should have to expend some of his ten dollars upon some one besides himself! I declare, I hate meanness above every thing."

Whitehouse, rather short of breath and exceedingly red in the face from blowing the bladders, stopped that occupation long enough to say that it wasn't fair to judge a fellow's generosity from such a trifling circumstance, and that he had always rather liked Randolph. Then, as the bladder took to decreasing, he closed his defense of the supposed absent one by applying himself to it with increased zeal.

"I don't see what you can like in him; he is as mean as he can be. I shall torment his life out of him until he spends every penny of that ten dollars on the crowd, see if I don't."

"A great deal of money, I find, is apt to make boys selfish, and I am almost glad that I don't have more than enough to squeeze through the term with. You must not be hard on Randolph. Every one has their faults, you know, and he is particularly pleasant and obliging. Phil is very fond of him."

"O Phil likes him because he has been brought up to; besides, Randolph toadies him; in fact, that is another of his virtues. Just see how he has toadied Dabney since he has been made teacher, and handles the reports. Ugh! it is disgusting."

"Well, I am glad if any one can fraternize with Dabney, no matter what his motive may be in doing so, for a more friendless, deserted fellow I never saw. You know some time ago Dr. Grimshaw asked me to be more sociable with him; but, O dear, it was no use trying! He wouldn't let me, and I gave it up at last as a bad job. I think the Doctor is very much pleased with Christie's success, and I know Randolph is a little bit of a favorite with him."

"I don't doubt it, though how he manages to get around the powers that be in such an easy

manner I can't see. Lucky dog, but a mighty mean one."

Christie was very much surprised to hear himself thus discussed. He did not care so much what Bonner thought of him; but he greatly admired Whitehouse, who was certainly a very fine, noble fellow. He always met him in the chapel at the vesper service, and though there was too much difference in their ages for Christie to hope for much intimacy with him, yet Whitehouse always greeted him with a pleasant smile or a few kind words. Several times also he had complimented him on his proficiency in French, and Christie was particularly anxious to stand well with him, so that his anger was even greater than his surprise.

His first impulse was to jump over the wall and knock Bonner down; his next to explain why he was so close with his money; but then the words contained in the letter from his mother, which he yet held in his hands, constrained him. The gift would not be acceptable to Dabney if the boys knew he had obtained the coat through him; moreover, his natural delicacy forbade his making the matter public, though in doing so he might defend

himself against such an accusation as meanness ; so he clenched his fist, ground his teeth, and tried to keep quiet, and not to hear what followed, that his anger might not get the better of his judgment.

Though Christie was not quick to take offense, and rarely exhibited temper, he was exceedingly violent when roused, and now actually rolled on the grass with the emotions which contended in his breast : anger, mortification, hatred, and revenge rankled there together until he forgot duty, forgiveness, and love altogether, and was ready to commit any unseemly act. He only remembered Bonner's bullying disposition, his continual interference with others, and, lastly, his prejudicing one against him who confessed rather to have liked him. Christie dearly liked to please, and the longer he thought of it the more angry he became.

Picking up his hat from the ground, he ran as fast as he could after the two boys, who were at this time walking toward the school. They had a good deal the start of him, so that he did not catch up with them until they had reached the play-ground ; but Christie was too much excited to care for the spectators, and dashing

up to Bonner, breathless, and livid with passion, he gave vent to these words:

"You are a mean, contemptible bully, and try to wring money out of all the boys' pockets! I despise you as heartily as you can despise me, and I wouldn't give you a cent should you beat me black and blue."

All the boys started at this singular outburst from one usually so modest and retiring, and inquired of each other what it meant.

If Bonner had the clue, he was too much amazed to enlighten any one. The idea of that little puny fellow braving him in that public manner was something extraordinary to him.

"No," continued Christie, almost shrieking, "I would not give you a cent if you were starving—not if you were dying at my feet!"

"That will do, sir," rang out a clear, stern voice.

Christie looked up. O horrors! it was Dr. Grimshaw speaking.

"What is the meaning of all this?" he inquired. "I am surprised, I am disappointed in you, Randolph."

Christie's anger fled for the instant, his head

drooped, and he stood covered with confusion. What he had said he hardly knew. His head began to throb, and he felt so dizzy he could hardly stand. As he seemed actually incapable of answering, Dr. Grimshaw turned to Phil for information; but the bewildered cousin stood with his hands in his pockets, his mouth and eyes wide open with astonishment.

"Well, Bonner, perhaps you can account for this extraordinary scene."

"I don't know what it means, unless Randolph took exception at my asking him to treat with the ten dollars which he received in the morning mail," said Bonner, looking very much injured and innocent.

"I am afraid, sir," said Whitehouse, "that he heard some very uncomplimentary remarks we made concerning him as Bonner and I were walking from the post-office, though it doesn't seem possible either, for no one was within hearing."

"That would be no excuse whatever for such unwarrantable language. Since you cannot keep your temper, Randolph, while you are with your companions, you may retire to the school-room and learn forty pages of history to

recite the next half holiday. I thought you could control yourself better," said the Doctor.

Without a word Christie turned away.

"Can't I go with him, Dr. Grimshaw?" asked Phil.

"No," answered the Doctor, decidedly; "a little solitude will do him good. I wish," continued Dr. Grimshaw, speaking more to himself than to his pupils, "that parents would not be so injudicious as to send their boys such large sums of money to squander; it does a great deal of harm."

"How good I must be," whispered Fish-ball to Johnson; "I haven't had a penny since the first week of the term!"

"Dr. Grimshaw," cried Whitehouse as he followed that gentleman from the play-ground, "I don't blame Randolph for feeling angry if he heard our remarks."

"I blame him for not controlling that anger," resumed the Doctor. "I understand Bonner exactly. He is very exasperating; but if we allow ourselves to harbor and act out our angry feelings, even when we are justly incensed, there is no knowing where it may lead us. Every one in the world must sometimes meet

provoking and malicious people, and it is of the utmost importance that we learn in youth to control ourselves in such society."

Slowly and sorrowfully Christie went to the school-room. He felt that he had disgraced himself before his teacher and school-fellows by such a display of temper. He could but see that the boys had some reason to think him mean by hoarding, as they thought, so much money; "but it was none of Bonner's business," he argued, "what he did with his own;" and the resentful feeling returned. But this time he fought it manfully, praying for grace to be humble and patient, like unto Him who saith, "For what glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently; but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." By the time the bell rang, and the boys came flocking into the school-room, the struggle was almost over; he was almost ready to forgive Bonner, even as he himself wished to be forgiven, but not quite.

The little spark left to smolder soon rekindled into a flame when it became evident to him that the disgraceful affair was well circu-

lated among the boys, and Bonner had given his own version of it.

There is no vice more unpopular with schoolboys than meanness about money, and Christie was made to feel the truth of this assertion during the morning by the palpable change in the conduct of his associates toward himself. He had one consolation, however, in the way of a little note, which came skipping under his desk, tied to a small stick. It was short, and characteristic of the writer, running as follows:

"What a funny scrape for you to be in. I didn't know you had so much spirit. Hold to the cash. I will back you. PHIL."

This was not the only way Master Philip testified that he had taken sides with his cousin, for in the play-ground he had vindicated Christie's character for generosity in the loudest tones; and if vehemency, a high-pitched voice, and a menacing manner could alone carry conviction, more would have adopted his views. Indeed, he was very ready to bluster, threaten, and even fight in Christie's defense, and thought he displayed great courage thereby;

but notwithstanding this show of heroism, it was the manifestation of the lowest form of it, being merely physical. One single act of self-denial and self-sacrifice, engendered by *moral* courage, was worth it a thousand fold. The heroism of self-denial and self-sacrifice is far more noble and grand than much of the mock courage which dazzles the eyes of school-boys; and if Phil, instead of fighting, had acknowledged to his comrades that he had misrepresented the wealth of his uncle, and that Christie was allowed no more spending-money than a great many others among them, he would have done him a much greater service, and displayed a truer courage; but Phil was eminently selfish, and by no means willing to make so mortifying a confession.

When he saw that Christie was likely to suffer from the bombast he had indulged in, he felt really sorry that he had poured those exaggerated stories into the ears of his gossip-loving companions. Ten dollars, an unusually large sum for a scholar at the Franklin Institute to receive, seemingly corroborated his statement, and he alone of all the boys that saw the money as it dropped from the letter at Fish-

ball's feet was amazed at the amount; for the lavish Phil, who was always out of funds, often applied to his more prudent cousin for ready money, and knew as well as Christie how often and to what extent his purse was replenished. He was therefore very eager for an opportunity of seeing Christie alone, and ascertaining for what purpose the money had been sent. In the mean time he had no idea of contradicting his own stories, and continued to assert that his cousin was "up to his chin in money, and could buy and sell all of them."

But Christie knew nothing of this. He saw with surprise upon first coming among them how many frittered away their money in sweets, and wisely determined not to follow their example. The urgent invitations to treat that were so frequently given him were neither agreeable nor possible to accept. Still he received them good-naturedly, regarding them as a part of the annoyances a new scholar must submit to. Upon this occasion, however, he not only lost sight of that bright pattern of goodness that neither temptations nor persecutions could tarnish, and which it was his purpose and aim to follow, but his

heart was filled with anger, as we have seen.

Every thing seemed to him cruelly out of joint on this day. He could think of nothing but his troubles, and his lessons were accordingly but half learned, and poorly recited. "I am losing favor even with the teachers," he thought as Mr. Hunnewell returned his book with a gesture of impatience. He had signally failed in recitation again, displaying thereby a stupidity which would have disgraced a much younger pupil.

Time passed slowly and wretchedly until four o'clock, the hour when lessons were over for the afternoon, and as the bell rang which set eighty captives free, Christie gave a sigh of relief. Now he could have the opportunity to think over his perplexities in peace, and devise some means of getting righted with the boys. He was about to seek some spot where, secure from intrusion, he could give the subject his whole thought, when he suddenly remembered Dr. Grimshaw's command to learn forty pages of history to recite the next half holiday, which would be on the morrow; so he drearily reseated himself at his desk and took

out the vexatious volume. A happy murmur of voices, joyous with regained liberty, came floating in at the open window. Every one seemed happy but himself.

Dispirited and cast down, he felt that he could not wear the mantle of contempt which had fallen upon him within the past few hours. He had expected to be roughed, had made up his mind that his school-fellows would haze and torment him ; but all new scholars were subjected to the same treatment, and it would be done from no personal dislike to himself. He was not prepared for any thing like disgrace, and willingly would have borne any physical discomfort rather than feel that he was despised for meanness.

Whatever may have been Christie's weaknesses and faults, meanness was not among them. He had practiced generosity with his pocket-money so long that it had become a habit with him to give, his second-nature as it were ; and now, not for one moment did he relinquish his cherished plan of purchasing a coat and vest for Dabney. His pity for his friend was too genuine, his love too sincere, to permit him to give to Bonner instead,

whom he could only think of with hatred and bitterness.

In this hour of dire necessity he did not turn again to God as his only helper, hopefully and trustfully laying his burden upon him. He was discouraged by his own sinfulness; he could not pray. It seemed to him like mocking God to say, "Thy will be done," while his heart was filled with that stubborn resentment and passionate impatience of disgrace. He thought he could himself contrive some scheme of bringing back the old sunshine which had departed from him. Thus he doubted God and trusted himself. Is it strange that he wandered further from the path of duty, and that darkness and error encompassed him?

CHAPTER XII.

Dark and Dreary.

ABOVE the murmur of cheerful voices, the bustle, glee, and jest of the play-ground, the sound of strife was distinctly wafted on the breeze. It reached Christie's ear as he sat alone in the school-room, pondering the subject which was causing him so much annoyance. As it drew nearer and nearer he recognized Phil's voice loud in dispute, and after a grand tussle in the hall, that young person burst into the room. He shut the door with a slam, and turning the key, defiantly bade the outsiders to "bang away!"

"To whom are you talking?" inquired Christie.

"To Bonner and the rest of our set. I have been quarreling with them about you. Now, Christie, tell me all about the money."

"It was sent to me from mother for a particular purpose, and I do not intend to give it to Bonner."

Phil nodded his head approvingly.

"It is yours, Christie, and the boys have no right to demand it of you. I have just been telling them so, and if I were in your place I would stick to it, on principle."

"But it is so unpleasant," said Christie discontentedly. "Couldn't you pay up some of your old debts just to help me out of a tight place?"

Phil shook his head. "I couldn't give you a penny, if it were the only means of keeping you out of State Prison; for I parted with my all this morning when I bought my new top. It's a capital one;" and he drew it from his pocket for Christie's inspection.

But Christie's interest in Phil's possessions flagged for once, and the "capital top" received only a preoccupied stare.

"Wont you get me out of this scrape, then, Phil, by carrying a message to the boys from me? You may say that I sent for ten dollars for a special purpose, and therefore cannot spend it to treat them with; but as soon as I have another remittance from home I will give the best spread that the money will procure."

Phil rather demurred at being the bearer

of any such conciliatory message, but feeling that he had himself brought about the present uncomfortable state of things, he finally consented to carry the flag of truce to the enemy.

He returned to headquarters rather crestfallen, and reported to Christie that the foe were very incredulous concerning the "special purpose," and demanded to know what it was. "Not that they have any right to inquire," he continued, planking himself on the top of a desk, to rest after his distasteful duty; "but as long as we have humiliated ourselves so far, we might as well have no mystery about it."

Christie's first impulse was to tell his cousin exactly what he intended to do with the money, but he checked it as he remembered Phil's avowed pleasure in tormenting Dabney, and his readiness to sacrifice any promise for the sake of cracking a good joke, or making a witty speech, so he refused to answer the question.

"Just as you please," returned Phil, swinging his legs and pretending that he wasn't in the least curious; "but remember, it is peace or war with the boys!"

"Let it be war, then," said Christie, resolutely. "I shall have one ally, for *you* haven't lost faith in me, have you, Phil?"

At which question Master Philip looked remarkably gentle for him, and diving into the depths of his pockets fished up a miscellaneous assortment of articles, from which he selected a large piece of spruce gum, and having disengaged it from a long string, he offered it to his cousin as an emblem of his unaltered esteem.

In the enjoyment of this dainty, and the society of his cousin, Christie for awhile forgot his troubles, until he was reminded of them by Phil, who commiserated with him upon the unlucky position he was in, and warily brought forward the advantages of every one's being able to make money for himself. "If you were not so squeamish," continued he, "you could soon get straightened out of this snarl."

"How so?" inquired Christie.

"O you are so strict I do not like to tell you; you might not approve of my way of helping you, though in truth I can't see the harm myself. Don't you remember I tried to tell you in the cars, when we were coming here, how I added to my allowance; only you nipped the

story in the bud by acting as if I were contaminating you? A fellow don't like to be snubbed when he is trying to do you a good turn."

"Why, Phil, you know I never thought of such a thing as snubbing you. Do be good-natured and tell me what to do," and Christie looked so despairingly at him that Phil began—

"One day, during vacation, I went to the Washington Market in New York. While I was waiting there for father, who was settling a bill, a boy came in with a string of partridges, just such game as run about the woods here unmolested. I was curious to see what they would bring. To my surprise, I found he sold them all at one stall for fifty cents apiece. Seeing what an easy way it was to make money, I struck up a bargain with the butcher forthwith, agreeing to send him as many partridges as he could dispose of for the modest sum of fifty cents a head, he paying the expressage."

"How jolly," remarked Christie, a bright hope illuminating his countenance.

"Jolly, but risky," answered Phil, "for it must needs be against the law to kill partridges at this season of the year; there are

placards posted all through the woods stating that the offenders will be fined five dollars."

"Then we can't make any money that way," exclaimed Christie, hope sinking once more in his breast.

"Yes we can; only we shall have to be very careful not to get caught. I overheard old Farmer Wells complaining to Dr. Grimshaw that his pupils were infringing upon this law, and declaring that if he could only catch them at it he should serve them just as he did the village boys. I suppose that is the reason the Doctor cautioned us about it the other morning after prayers, saying that if we were unable to pay the fine we might get into the county jail, which would be horrible."

"Very true," returned Christie.

"Therefore we must take every precaution," pursued Phil.

"You don't intend to go in spite of all you have told me?" exclaimed Christie.

"Why not? I know how to manage not to get caught."

"But it is so wrong," suggested Christie.

"There! I told you I should get snubbed if I tried to help you."

"That isn't a snub. I am very grateful, you know I am, and I would really like to go with you, only—"

"Only I am so wicked; it's a pity I am not more like your crony Dabney;" and Phil tossed his head with a disdainful sense of his superiority. The easy grace which he so carelessly wore was never more apparent to Christie than now as he contrasted him in his mind with Dabney. "What a difference there is," he thought, "between my two friends!"

The difference was not merely external, for at the very moment while Phil was enticing his cousin to wrong-doing, a scene was taking place within the narrow limits of Dabney's little room which bore an influence upon his life for evermore, for on bended knees and with an aching heart Dabney was crying to an All-merciful father, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." At last he was casting his heavy burden upon the only Being who could free him from it, and as he arose from his knees his mind was filled with light, joy, and peace. He realized for the first time the inestimable gift of salvation through Christ, and he longed to pour into some

sympathizing ear the blessedness of trusting in him. His thoughts naturally turned to Christie as the one who would rejoice with him in his newly-found happiness. It was after school-hours; he wondered why he did not come to him. In his eagerness to see him he left his room and sauntered through the halls. He at length saw him coming out of the school-room with his cousin.

"Remember, to-morrow at four o'clock," was Phil's parting injunction.

"To-morrow at four o'clock," repeated Christie uneasily as he joined Dabney.

"And what about to-morrow at four o'clock?" inquired Dabney.

"Nothing—I mean I am going to walk with Phil at that time;" and Christie flushed up and commenced to rattle away in the most unconnected strain.

"Let us go into my room and have a quiet talk," suggested Dabney, longing to open his heart to his friend; but for once Christie didn't wish a quiet talk. He didn't seem to be listening to any thing that Dabney was saying, and finally broke abruptly away from him with some trifling excuse, and fled out into the open

air. He didn't much care where he went; any where, he thought, to escape an accusing conscience. Dabney's mood jarred upon him; he had often longed to speak to him of the goodness of Jesus, but now, when the opportunity presented itself, he wished to forget it altogether; for had he not deliberately decided to do wrong?

Solitude is for those who are at peace with themselves and with others. In Christie's present mood it weighed heavily upon him. Thought will not be put in shackles, neither will the cries of conscience be stilled at our pleasure, and the hour Christie now passed alone was perhaps the most miserable he ever experienced. He went to sleep that night without a prayer upon his lips, or a word of comfort gleaned from God's own Word. It might shake his resolution to read or pray, he thought, and he was determined that, whether right or wrong, he would not lose the little popularity he had gained in the school for the want of a little money which could be so easily procured.

CHAPTER XIII.

Dabney Turns Comforter.

IT cannot be said that Christie really enjoyed walking in the path which he now proposed to follow. To be sure, he successfully imitated Phil's jocular manner, after meeting him at the appointed hour on the following day; but he was secretly annoyed that he was accompanied by Bonner, who, though he seemed to ignore their late difference, was by no means agreeable to him. Indeed, his coarse and contemptuous speeches concerning all those in authority over him might well pain one to hear, and Christie could but feel that he was bringing himself down to the same level by being his accomplice in the disgraceful enterprise upon which he was embarked.

"What have you in that bag under your arm?" asked Christie of Phil as they stealthily crossed the meadow which intervened between the school-house and the woods.

"Snares," whispered Phil, looking about to assure himself that he was not overheard. "We can't use a gun; the report would bring the whole village at our heels; so we shall have to resort to snares. We can set them now without the least danger of discovery, and find our game all ready for us when we come for it a few days hence."

"Why should the villagers object to our killing partridges if we want to?" inquired Christie.

"I suppose the law is made to prevent the game from running out. It is only during certain months that we are prohibited from destroying it," answered Phil.

"That is reasonable," thought Christie with a twinge of remorse.

"Ha, ha, your cousin is frightened already, Phil," laughed Bonner as he noticed Christie's disturbed look.

"By no means!" cried Christie, joining in with Phil as he proclaimed America to be a free country, and loudly denounced Farmer Wells or any other meddler who interfered with what didn't concern him.

"It's uncommonly jolly, isn't it?" said Chris-

tie from time to time; yet, notwithstanding this continued assertion, it must be confessed he was very glad when the snares were set and they were homeward bound, and felt a positive relief when he found himself once more in the school grounds, though it seemed to him as if every one he met must know the meanness he had perpetrated.

"Hurrah, boys! the fort is nearly finished, and we can have our mock fight, after all, to-morrow afternoon," said Johnson exultingly as he met the boys, and placed a shovel in Phil's hands, as a hint that his services would be acceptable even at the eleventh hour.

"What's the use of our exerting ourselves?" objected Bonner. "I don't believe we can get it done in time."

"I tell you it is nearly finished already. We boys have been working like troopers all the afternoon. Dabney has helped us. You wouldn't believe one fellow could give us such a lift."

"Dabney!" cried all three in amazement.

"Yes, Dabney. He was walking about here, and seeing what a hurry we were in, actually volunteered to help us. He isn't such a bad

fellow after all, for he worked with a right good will until Dr. Grimshaw called him in. Sickness has loosened his tongue a little too, for he tried to be sociable."

"Hallo! Johnson has gone over to the enemy," laughed Phil.

"Well, call it what you like, I certainly think Dabney is different since his fever. He isn't half so wrapped up in himself. I don't understand it."

There was one of the group, however, that did. Christie was sure, although he said nothing, that he had the clue to the mystery which perplexed Johnson. He knew that Dabney's heart was at peace with God, and it was that which made him more kindly and unselfish.

How long it seemed since he himself had been happy! yet it was only a few days ago. What he was pleased to call a little sin had set him wrong at first, and now, in this short time, he had drifted so far from Christ that he dreaded his accustomed visit to Dabney lest he should hear His name.

"That is right; come in," said Dabney as Christie entered his room a little while later.

He put down the book he had been reading, and made a place for him at the window overlooking the play-ground at which he was sitting. "I was almost afraid you were going to desert me," he continued in a cheery voice, while a real welcome shone from his bright gray eyes. "I don't believe, Christie, I am half grateful enough for your kindness to me, or, in fact, for any of my blessings. It seems to me to-day that there are hope, light, and joy in the world for me yet, for I read such a comforting promise this morning: 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' I don't believe I ever heard that before; at all events I never thought much about it if I did. It seems to clear up so much that troubled me. I used to feel so rebellious about mother's lot; now I can see that it was all for the best. I am sure she thought so. I can remember even now how she reasoned, pleaded with me, and strove to make me see God's hand in all our troubles. 'It is through trials to triumph,' she used to say. O I hope I may never get hard or rebellious again! But I mistrust myself. I am afraid I shall soon tire of trying to do right. You love Jesus, Christie; you never

forget your duty. Wont you help me to be as you are?"

Help him to be like himself! What did that mean, he thought, but to cherish bitter, resentful feelings; to be filled with pride, and a morbid desire to please at any sacrifice of principle; to abuse the greatest privileges and stifle the strongest convictions; to be guilty of breaking rules which many of the most thoughtless of his companions would scorn to violate, and yet he had dared to call himself a child of God! Self-blame held him tongue-tied.

"You think there can be no pardon for one as sinful as I am," said Dabney, mistaking the cause of Christie's silence. "So I thought once, but now I know that Christ is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; that he forgave David, who committed murder; his disciples, who forsook him; even Peter, who denied him."

"'His disciples who forsook him!'" repeated Christie, while keen remorse smote him as he conceded to himself that in the particular of forsaking him he had done but as the disciples did. "O, Dabney," he cried, "I cannot help you! I am too weak even to help myself;"

and then he poured into his friend's ear the history of the past few days; how he had thrown over his private devotions, stifled his better thoughts, and even gone the length of breaking school and State laws. "I am so sorry, so miserable," he continued simply.

"It is only to those who feel the burden of their sins that God offers forgiveness and mercy," said Dabney gently.

"But not unless we renounce them. O, Dabney, you don't know how hard it is to give up going for those partridges! Not that I care for the sport, but the money they would bring me would be so acceptable just now."

Perhaps there was no trial which Dabney could better understand or appreciate than the one of being without money. Owing to his retiring habits, he knew nothing of the grand stories which Phil had so freely circulated concerning Christie's means, and now supposed, from the few remarks he had gathered that afternoon while he was working with the boys, that Christie was hard pushed for spending money.

As he could not help him in this particular, from motives of pure delicacy he forebore men-

tioning the subject, but it was a bond of sympathy nevertheless.

Dabney had lately discovered that there were utterances in God's holy book which would meet the need of every heart, and so for Christie's sake he asked him in all simplicity if he would read from it aloud. The chapter which Christie selected at random did not fail to strengthen and help him; and as the shadows lengthened and the chapel bell rang, calling those who would come to the house of prayer, no humbler, happier head was bowed there in thanksgiving that God was merciful to sinners than Christie's.

"It is strange," thought Dr. Grimshaw as he noticed Christie's calm and happy face, at such variance with the expression it had worn for several days. "I can't believe that boy to be selfish, bad-tempered, or stupid; yet he has seemed all of that of late. I must watch him."

So, although Christie did not know it, his conduct was under strict surveillance for some time.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Walk to W——.

NOW that the friendship between Dabney and Christie was cemented by the same interests it grew faster than ever, and Christie became impatient that his friend should possess those artificial advantages which would give him a fair start with the rest of the boys, and for this reason he might have been seen on a certain Saturday morning applying to Dr. Grimshaw for permission to visit the neighboring town of W——, but a few miles distant, which the boys often frequented on shopping expeditions. Christie had been there several times, and had often remarked a certain tailor's establishment, wherein, Lawton had informed him, were to be found perfect miracles of art in the way of coats.

His request being readily granted, he flew to the dormitory to equip himself for his walk, when it became apparent to him that there had been other applicants to Dr. Grimshaw before

him, and a whole party was dressing to go to the same place.

Dabney, it seemed, was in blissful ignorance of the real cause of the annoyances Christie had sustained of late; but, lest he might make any discoveries in the future, and be made uncomfortable thereby, Christie concluded to send his present anonymously. He had half a mind to give up the trip for that day, as he felt that it was essential that he should go by himself; but holidays did not come very often, and, on second thought, he hoped to be able to slip off unperceived before the party was ready, and be in nowise inconvenienced by the boys.

"Vain are the hopes of man!" Certain suspicious acts were not lost upon Phil, who, sitting astride of a trunk, was watching the rapid movements of the rest as they were dressing in a hurry to be off.

"Where are you going, Christie?" said he, buttonholing him as he was leaving the room ready for a start.

"Let me pass, Phil; I can't stop to tell you now."

"But you must," returned Phil, holding him fast.

"To town," answered Christie in a low tone.

"I am very much obliged to you, but really I have a pressing engagement, and can't go with you this morning," said Phil mischievously.

"Who invited you?" laughed Christie.

"Why you, of course, intended to; but— O don't explain. I see how it is, now you have Dabney's society mine is at a discount.

"Nothing of the kind!" said the luckless Christie, more eagerly than wisely; "I am going alone."

"Attention, boys! Here is another enterprising spirit ready to join your expedition in search of treasure," cried Phil, influenced by the kindest motives toward his cousin.

"I think I shall start on a solitary cruise," laughed Christie, "I am in such a hurry for my plunder."

"You might have to share it, you know, if you waited for the rest of us," Bonner remarked significantly.

"And he knows who would get the lion's share," returned Phil with spirit.

"Now we are in for a regular set-to," said Lawton.

But Christie did not wait to hear any more. Slipping out of the room, he turned his steps toward the town. The way was long, but, stimulated by the fresh morning air and the desire of being greatly in advance of the others, he accomplished the walk in a much shorter time than he had expected. From afar he discerned the small army of headless figures which stood around the door of Monsieur Fouchet's tailor shop, to illustrate, for the benefit of the passers-by, the talents of that artist.

Upon entering the establishment, Christie inquired for Monsieur, and passed a very satisfactory half hour in his society. Monsieur delighted in mystery—Monsieur understood the affair exactly, saying,

"It was un leetle present, that which meester wished to give. C'est bien; c'est tres bien! He it would arrainge charmant." And, accordingly, he confided to Christie the way he usually managed such delicate cases, until that young person was quite charmed with Monsieur's affability and ingenuity, and left fully impressed with the idea that all was going off to a marvel.

On his return trip, having dispatched his business, he felt a disposition to look about him. There was sufficient animation in the streets to amuse him. The shop windows looked very gay and tempting, and as he sauntered along he stopped every few moments to look at some attraction which they offered, regardless that the sun was getting higher and higher, and the day becoming oppressively warm, until he found himself so tired, heated, and thirsty that he longed to be home again. He wished that he had money enough to ride, and was just examining his pocket-book to assure himself that there wasn't an odd ten-cent bill therein, which he had somehow overlooked, when he was clapped on the shoulder by some one, and on looking around found the boys at his heels in full force.

"I tell you what it is, Christie," said Fish-ball, "you must shell out this time and give us a ride home; we are all dead broke, and can't pay for it ourselves. It is a screeching hot day, and flesh and blood couldn't stand that long walk."

"I would be delighted to accommodate you," said Christie, looking very much wilted, "but

I was just mourning because I hadn't the money to treat myself to that luxury."

"O Christie, Christie!" exclaimed Fish-ball, pulling the open pocket book out of his hands, and taking therefrom a ten and a three dollar bill to show to the envious boys. "What's good for liars?"

"I have just spent that," said Christie.

"How splendid it must be to spend your money and have it too," said Johnson.

"I mean," said the unfortunate, "that I owe it."

> "O gold, gold, gold, gold,
> Bright and yellow, hard and cold,"

cried Fish-ball.

"Give back the little miser his money," said Lawton scornfully; "seeing is believing. I have always thought that the boys were rather hard on Randolph, but now I know he deserved it all."

"Every thing is against me," thought Christie bitterly. "It is no use trying to clear myself; they wont believe me; they think I am lying, as well as hoarding;" and he looked timidly around him to find one sympathizing face among them; but all looked cold and distrustful.

"Since you wont give us a ride you sha'n't have one yourself," cried Bonner. "You've just got to march home with the rest. Move on."

And somehow Christie found himself walking in the center of a procession, a prisoner to all intents and purposes.

It is trying to one's temper to trudge at noonday, in the heat of summer, over hot and dusty roads with the dazzling sun blinding one's eyes, and scorching one's face, when you feel that you might be rolling comfortably and gayly along in a coach if only a miserly companion, "who was up to his chin in money," would spend a trifle of his abundance. This was the view which the boys took, and each felt particularly aggrieved, and worked out his spleen on Christie as the most fitting subject. Coats were taken off and handed to him to carry; bundles given into his charge, until he was so overburdened that he could hardly drag one foot after the other, and taunting remarks were made which cut like a knife into his tender heart.

He was almost too hurt to be angry. He had lived in too calm and holy a frame of mind

for the past few days to be easily moved to wrath. The remembrance of his recent misdoings had made him humble and watchful, yet now it seemed that this was more than he could bear, and he actually thought of stealing away from school and running home, where he would be safe from misconstruction and cold treatment. What was the use, he argued, of being placed in a situation of constant temptation and annoyance? Was he not a thousand times better at home, where he never got angry, never neglected his devotions, or broke rules? But a better spirit prevailed. "It is indeed a cowardly soldier of the cross," he said to himself, "who deserts his post because of danger. How much more manly and noble it will be to fight the good fight wherever God sees fit to place me, trusting in his strength to give me the victory."

Every thing must come to an end some time, and so did that walk, though Christie thought two miles never seemed so long or dreary before, and he never imagined the dull old Institute could look so pleasant and attractive to him as it did when, faint and exhausted, he reached its friendly portal. Dr. Grimshaw was

standing on the door-steps when the party entered the house.

"I hope you did not walk from the town in all this heat and dust," he said as he noted the languid manner and heated condition of the boys. "Why did you not wait for the noon coach?"

"Because none of us had money, sir, excepting Randolph," answered Bonner maliciously.

Dr. Grimshaw looked hard at his old favorite and his brow darkened ominously.

"If he thinks I have done wrong he will say so," thought Christie, "and then I believe I will tell him what I am going to do with this troublesome money. Perhaps he can help me."

But, unfortunately for him, Dr. Grimshaw turned abruptly and went into his study.

"All for the best," thought the noble little fellow, "for the Bible says, 'When thou doest thy alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.'"

CHAPTER XV.

An Anonymous Gift.

IT was as clear and beautiful an afternoon as one would care to see when two boys left the Franklin grounds for a stroll in that glorious land known as "out of bounds!"

One of them was by no means in his usual good-temper, and as he walked along knocked from its stem many a clover-head which bloomed in his path by way of giving emphasis to his words.

"It's what I call mean!" said Phil, for it was he. "There is no one in the school that would answer our purpose in carrying home the game as well as Christie. The farmers about here don't know him as well as they do you and me, Bonner, and wouldn't suspect him as readily. It is a shame he must needs back out now."

"What do you suppose is the reason he wont go with us?" asked Bonner.

"He says it is because he don't think it right," answered Phil with a flout.

"No great loss without some small gain. We sha'n't have to share the profits with him now. I suppose he preferred going to W—— with Dabney, for I heard him asking permission of Dr. Grimshaw to do so. He might as well have confessed it, instead of making his conscientious scruples an excuse for not accompanying us."

"Christie don't condescend to lie, which I wish I could say for all my friends," said Phil, suddenly wheeling round and attacking Bonner; for like many other people he didn't care to hear ill-natured remarks concerning a friend whom he was not slow to scold about himself; besides he was not a little annoyed by the circumstance which Bonner had just brought to his notice. He had known too long that he was hero-worshiped by Christie to hear unmoved that another was preferred before him, though had any one told him he was jealous of Dabney he would have been very much surprised; yet it must be confessed he was suffering from that uncomfortable sentiment; and Bonner, understanding matters exactly, meanly took advan-

tage of them, as they walked on in search of the snares they had set, to rouse Phil's ire toward his cousin.

Christie, in the meanwhile, in happy unconsciousness of what was taking place, was enjoying the afternoon greatly, and feeling almost repaid for the suffering he endured a few days previous. Since Dabney's illness, Dr. Grimshaw had insisted, as one of the conditions by which he kept his position in the school, that Dabney should take a short walk every day, no matter what the weather might be. Accordingly, at a certain hour every afternoon, he and Christie could have been seen wandering off together on the quietest of all possible larks. At first Dabney had regarded these short diversions as necessary evils ; but soon he grew to love the little breaks of his busy life, and had made his friend supremely happy by telling him that he did not know how he had lived without them. It was, therefore, quite surprising to Christie, when, at the appointed hour on this lovely afternoon, he went to their usual trysting-place in the garden, that he did not find Dabney there waiting for him.

" He is probably engaged in a book, and has

forgotten all about our walk," he thought. "I must go and hunt him up, and start him off."

Christie found him in his own room a few minutes later, seated all twisted up at the window, his chin resting on the sill, his eyes fixed on vacancy; so deep in thought that he was not aware of his visitor's entrance or near approach.

"What kind of a problem are you solving this time?" asked Christie.

"The hardest one I ever hit upon," said Dabney, starting up, and looking so wild and perplexed that Christie wondered what was the matter.

"What do you think, Christie? what *do* you think? I have received a letter from the crack tailor in W——, stating that a gentleman has left an order at his establishment for a coat and vest for me, and requests me to call at once and be measured for the same. What do you suppose it means?"

"That some one has had the good sense to make you a present, Dabney," said Christie, trying very hard to look as he ought under the circumstances.

Dabney ran his long fingers through his hair

until it stood all on end, but it did not help him to solve the mystery.

"There must be some mistake. I don't know any one who would be likely to make me such a present. Look, here's the letter, Christie; let me see what you can make of it."

Christie took the sheet, glad of any excuse to hide his face a moment, for he never felt a stronger disposition to laugh in his life.

"You don't seem half so surprised as Dr. Grimshaw did," said Dabney as Christie, after reading the letter, laid it down complacently, much pleased with Monsieur's production.

"Then you told the Doctor?" asked Christie.

"Yes; I thought he might possibly know something about it. In fact, I look so shabby that I am a disgrace to the Institution, and I thought perhaps, for the credit of the school, Dr. Grimshaw had ordered the coat and vest himself; but he is as nonplussed over the letter as I am, and solemnly assures me he had nothing to do with it."

Christie's eyes twinkled. He was but a poor actor at all times, and upon this occasion was not at all up to the mark. Dabney would certainly have suspected him had he not been so

thoroughly impressed with the idea that he was out of funds.

"What shall I do about it?" asked Dabney.

"Why, take your present and be thankful," answered Christie.

"That is what the Doctor says; yet I am sure it is all a mistake. It can't be intended for me. Why, there isn't any one in the world, I tell you, who would think of making me a present, excepting Dr. Grimshaw or you, Christie, and as it is neither of you, who can it be?"

"Perhaps some of your mother's old friends, or your grandfather, repentant."

Dabney shook his head.

"Then," said Christie, "I give it up. Let us call it a gift dropped right down from the clouds. I am glad it fell into such fashionable hands, for your tailor makes most delectable fits. Don't sit staring as if you had lost your senses. Here's your cap, man. I move that we walk over to W——, and see what Monsieur Fouchet has to say upon the matter. You can be measured at the same time, you know, and perhaps he can get the clothes done in time for you to wear them next Thursday, public-speaking day. It would be so jolly to

have a tip-top coat to swell in upon that occasion. I will ask Dr. Grimshaw at once if we can go to W——."

"O don't! don't!" cried Dabney, looking frightened at the bare idea. "I should feel like a cat in a strange garret to be decked in a dandified coat, such as the finical fellows wear. I'd rather stick to the old jacket. It seems mean to cast off an old friend for a new."

"If you wear that jacket much longer it will break a blood-vessel. Just think, too, how much better you could declaim if you only had more breathing-room;" and Christie commenced to spout Dabney's pet speech with such freedom of gesticulation that Dabney laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks.

"We shall go to W—— on a Tom Fool's errand," said Dabney, after the laughter had subsided, and they had got back to the perplexing subject again. "I should not be surprised if it were a sell on me, originated in the fertile brain of Jack Bonner."

Strange to say, Christie was more sanguine. He dragged Dabney from his chair, placed a comb in his hand, and peremptorily ordered

him to make use of it. Then he whisked out of the room to the study to obtain the necessary permission of Dr. Grimshaw to visit the neighboring town, and came running back as eager and excited as if there were a present in store for himself as well as his friend.

What a gay, joyous walk it was to W—— this time! How different from Christie's last trip! Every thing seemed bright and lovely to him now!

A refreshing rain had lately laid the dust; the air was sweet and clear, and the sun just low enough to cast a pleasant glow over the fine country through which they passed. Christie was in fact ecstatically happy as he walked along, and sober, studious Dabney, forgetful of his usual staid demeanor, caught the infection, and became as merry and light-hearted as he. Many an eye followed the oddly-assorted pair as they sauntered up the main street of the little town. Every thing amused them, but especially their visit to the tailor. Christie was delighted to find how well Monsieur Fouchet carried out the plan which he had contrived for him upon a previous occasion, though he himself very nearly betrayed his secret by

9253 The New Coat.

Monsieur observed that "Ze gentleman who prezented ze coat would be ravished to see it now."—Page 193.

laughing; but he made amends by slipping the money very dexterously into Monsieur's hands, under Dabney's very nose, without it being suspected by him, as they were leaving the shop after having selected a ready-made coat and vest, which fitted Dabney admirably. How nice and gentlemanly he looked in it, Christie thought, and how drolly Monsieur observed that "Ze gentleman who prezented ze coat would be ravished to see it now."

Then came the happy walk home under the blue evening sky. It was too early for the moon to rise, but the dreamy, uncertain light of twilight seemed just suited to the mood of the two friends as arm in arm they trudged along. The goodness of the generous Unknown, and the pleasure both Dr. Grimshaw and Christie had betrayed upon hearing of his good fortune, had filled Dabney's heart with gratitude and a strange contentment, and he opened his heart to his friend as he had never done before; told him his future plans, his wild dreams, his hopes and fears, his discouragements, his besetting sins, and his desire to trust more in God's love and assistance in the future; until Christie, happy, interested, and loving, felt ready

to say, "Truly, it is more blessed to give than to receive." He never forgot the happiness of this walk through all the troubles it brought upon him. It was a bright remembrance which banished many an angry, selfish thought, and lighted many a dark hour.

CHAPTER XVI.

Bonner in Trouble.

THAT something out of the common course of events had occurred during their absence was very evident to the two friends when they reached home and proceeded to the dormitory, for through the halls and in the passage-ways, on the stairs and landings, groups of boys were scattered, eagerly discussing some subject, the interest of which seemed only to subside as they passed them. Christie wondered what that subject might be. He looked around for Phil, but, seeing nothing of him, asked several whom he met where he was; but though they laughed, or looked very wise, no one seemed inclined to answer his question, which occasioned him great uneasiness; and that he might the more readily ascertain the truth, he for once wished to rid himself of Dabney, whose presence he thought had something to do with their reticence; for, as teacher, he

had of late inspired the boys with a very wholesome awe of himself. They were beginning to understand that, however disagreeable the position might be to him, not even Dr. Grimshaw was more strict or exacted more sublime order.

It was not until the school had settled down for evening study that Christie missed Bonner. "He must be with Phil," he thought. He remembered seeing them start off together for game before he went to W——, and, as far as he could discover, they had not returned. What could they be about at this late hour? He grew more and more anxious about them every moment, and found himself narrowly watching the door, until at length it was stealthily opened, and a frowsy, mud-bespattered head was protruded through the smallest possible crack which would admit it, and a pair of dark eyes cautiously peered about.

"All right, Phil, come in! The coast is clear! Old Grim has gone out!" cried a chorus of voices.

Thus encouraged, Phil presented himself before his school-fellows. He had been running, and his condition may be best expressed by the

word *blown.* His clothes were torn, his face and hands bruised, and as he dropped into the nearest chair, battered, red, and panting, his appearance justified the laugh which was raised at his expense.

"Where is Bonner? Stop laughing, boys, and let us hear the news," cried Johnson.

"Two of the villagers caught him, and have him safe in their clutches at the post-office," answered Phil as soon as the noise had subsided. "They threaten to carry him to the jail at W—— unless he pays the fine, which is only five dollars, but, unfortunately, Bonner hasn't any money; no more have I. O if you could hear him beg off you'd die laughing! He takes the high and pathetic tone, and talks of his widowed mother. It was nuts to me as I stood looking at him through the back window of the office. I sent him a message by little Pat, (you know Pat, his father keeps my dog;) it was to the effect that if he'd only stop whining I would get the money by hook or by crook, and be back with it in less than no time. Now there is no use in making a rumpus by telling Dr. Grimshaw; he has forbidden our setting snares time and time again, and, of course,

would punish us for having done so. Suppose we make up the sum among ourselves, and so get him out of the scrape. Pass the cap, Johnson, and when you are in trouble we will do the like for you."

"What is it all about?" asked Christie.

"Why, haven't you heard?" said Phil. "Bonner and I were hunting partridges this afternoon, with very good results, when suddenly Bonner dropped the game-bag, white as a ghost, and cried that two men were trying to catch us; and on looking around I recognized one of them as Farmer Wells. Bonner was so frightened that he stood still and wrung his hands, instead of running for home as I did, and consequently got collared at once. I went through the thickest part of the woods, where the underbrush almost tore me in pieces, but succeeded reaching here in safety at last. After waiting some time for Bonner to arrive I concluded that he didn't get off, as I had hoped, and, to help him if possible, I went through the village on a voyage of discovery, and found him as I have said. But hurry, boys, and give me the money, for I must be off again."

"It is rather late in the term to find much in

the money-bags," said Lawton, searching his own, and finding therein only a receipt for paste, and an Indian coin which he kept as a lucky piece; "Bonner hasn't much sense of honor, yet I would help him if I could."

Phil was observed to blush very deeply at this home-thrust, but said nothing.

"I don't know that it is right to shield an unprincipled boy from a just punishment, yet, for the sake of his widowed mother, I give my all;" and Whitehouse took a dollar from his pocket-book with a very merry twinkle in his eyes.

"'Tis his last golden dollar,
Left blooming alone;
All its brilliant companions
Are squandered and gone,'"

hummed Fish-ball.

"I have thirty-six cents, and here it is," cried a very fine voice; and little Maxwell squeezed through the crowd and dropped it into the hat.

"Blessings, blessings on the infant!" said Phil, patting the little fellow patronizingly on the head. "Don't that put you to the blush, Briggs?"

But Briggs, not having any money, was fain

to content himself with assurances of his disposition to give, as did many others. In fact, the sum didn't accumulate very fast, and Phil was much disgusted, on counting over the contribution, to find that it would only make three dollars. He was just looking discontentedly about him when his eyes fell upon his cousin.

"Surely you will make up the difference, Christie," said he, holding the hat toward him.

Christie had been nervously anticipating this appeal, and, now that it was made, looked very conscious. He, however, answered stoutly enough that he hadn't any money.

An exclamation of horror arose from the crowd at this assertion. Boys who were not overscrupulous about telling the strict truth themselves were shocked, as well they might have been, at hearing what they thought so bold a lie.

"If you will just lend the money to-night I will see that you are paid myself," said Johnson, contemptuously; "and I would recommend you to trump up another excuse to cover your meanness, for since you were caught only last Saturday with thirteen dollars in your pos-

session, after asserting that you hadn't any money, it isn't strange that we have lost faith in that excuse."

Christie hardly heeded these insulting words, for Phil was angrily scowling at him in a most unprecedented manner. It was plain to be seen that he sided with his accusers.

Not that Phil really thought that his cousin had told a lie; he had never caught him in a falsehood in his life, and at any other time he would have done him the justice to say so; but his mind was so filled with the selfish, jealous apprehensions which his conversation with Bonner had occasioned, that now he felt ready to believe that Christie could help him if he would; and when he assured him that he had spoken the truth, he turned haughtily away from him, until Christie, in desperation, cried that he would let him know exactly what he had done with the money if he would promise not to tell the rest.

"No mysteries, if you please. You must tell before all the boys or I wont hear," answered Phil.

Christie shook his head; his feelings were too deeply hurt to speak, and he felt a des-

perate desire to rush off by himself and have a good cry.

"Don't clap on the water-works until I get out of the way," said Phil. "Come, Whitehouse, wont you go into the study and tell Dr. Grimshaw the trouble Bonner is in? If I appear before him, looking like such a guy, he will suspect at once that I have been gaming myself. You know that you are a little bit of a favorite, and he would as soon expect old Deacon French to cut up capers as you."

Whitehouse smiled, and said, with truth, that he would willingly go, only Dr. Grimshaw had noticed that both he and Bonner were absent at supper, and would naturally suppose they were together; therefore it would be much better for him to go himself and honestly tell the whole story, and he was sure the Doctor would lend the money rather than Bonner should be taken to W——.

"Suppose he punishes me?" said Phil, ruefully.

"Then take it patiently, for you know you deserve it," answered Whitehouse.

"Well," remarked Phil, with a dejected air, "I can't get the money any other way, so I

shall have to go ; but as far as I am concerned, I would rather go to W—— than to that study. How perfectly awful Dr. Grimshaw will look when he sees me!" and Phil tried to rub some of the mud off his face with a handkerchief not much cleaner.

"Take mine," said Christie.

"I want nothing to do with you or any thing that belongs to you," answered Phil.

When people are angry they are very apt to be unreasonable and unjust ; and Phil, instead of blaming himself and Bonner that they were in difficulty, felt resentful toward Christie, who couldn't fail to see the contemptuous glances of all the others.

"Well, I am off," said Phil, determined to have his interview with the Doctor over as soon as possible.

It was the first time in Christie's life that his cousin had treated him with real unkindness, and now he felt it all the more that he was joining in with his enemies ; but Phil was in trouble, and he was so sorry for him that, following him out of the room in the dimly-lighted hall, and catching him by the neck as he used to do when they were very little boys, he cried,

"O, Phil, do hear me! Just listen one moment! I can't have you feel so toward me! I gave away all the money I had, every cent of it."

"Let me alone," said Phil; "I don't want any of your sentiment;" and a sharp twinge of jealousy made it easy for him to throw him off. He felt reproached as, turning away, he caught Christie's expression, and had almost a mind to call him back; but pride and anger were too strong for his better feelings to triumph. He knew very well now to whom he had given the money. "Certainly he cares more for Dabney than for me," he argued, "or he would get back the money for me now that I am in such need;" but he was too proud to propose such a thing to his cousin. Thus was laid the corner-stone of the wall of separation, which lengthened every day between two boys who really cared more for each other's friendship than that of any of their schoolmates.

It was not the first time during the term Phil had stood a culprit at the study door, and now he entered the room with many misgivings. He thought he could almost detect a lurking smile upon Dr. Grimshaw's face as he surveyed him from head to foot; but his brow

darkened as he learned his errand, and he looked so stern that Phil lost all hope of obtaining Bonner's release.

"Do you know, Phil," said he, "what any community would be without law; what property would be respected; what life safe; what anarchy and confusion would be the result?"

Phil hung his head and said, "Yes, sir," to the carpet.

"Every one understands that, and is willing to support a government to make laws; but what is the use of making them unless they can be enforced? And is it just, manly, or generous to expect obedience of others, if we ourselves are regardless of law?"

Phil could but see the justice of Dr. Grimshaw's remarks, and felt very mean as the doctor continued:

"You and Bonner have been a great while in the school, and have probably as much influence as any boys in it; yet I am sorry to find that influence always exerted in encouraging disorder and insubordination, putting the little boys up to mischief, and playing mean practical jokes upon all new pupils. You have not learned obedience, without which it is impos-

sible to make a good citizen or a good man; and should I let you have the money, what assurance have I that you will do better in future?"

"My penitence," answered Phil.

"Well, I will attend to Bonner, and you may go to your room. I shall judge of your repentance by the humility with which you both accept whatever punishment I inflict upon you."

Phil left the room thinking he would never be guilty of a mean act again. But his penitence was not of the right kind, and consequently was but short-lived. It had its root in wounded vanity rather than a heartfelt sorrow for breaking God's commands. Phil admired Dr. Grimshaw; he called him "Old Grim," but nevertheless he respected him. He seemed to him so gentle, brave, and strong, and he felt very sorry that he had not his good opinion.

It was unpleasant to be thought unprincipled and disobedient, and, as I have said before, Phil did not like any thing unpleasant, and he thought that he would try and do better in future; but it never occurred to him that divine

assistance was necessary, or that good resolutions should be sanctified and made strong by prayer ; so he yielded to the first wrong impulse ; and this happened even while Dr. Grimshaw's words were ringing in his ear, and his determination to do better was but freshly fashioned.

On going up stairs Phil passed Dabney's room, the door of which stood open, enabling him to see his cousin within, sitting on a low bench almost at Dabney's feet. His book lay open on Dabney's knee, and both were reading from it.

"I will pay Christie for his meanness to me!" thought Phil.

Where were his good resolutions now? They had vanished like vapor, and were as if they had not been.

When Christie left Phil in the hall his heart was full of misery. He felt as if he could never face the boys then, so he looked about for some refuge where he could flee and be safe from the most cruel of all shafts—unkind words. Dabney's room offered such an asylum ; there he was always welcome. He had fallen into the habit of going there to read and write, or while away a quiet hour in an idle dream. He

never disturbed Dabney, and often the two boys would sit hours together without exchanging a word, both happy, busy, and contented.

To-night Christie went softly in, and, receiving a smile of welcome, took a book and seated himself opposite Dabney at the table where he was industriously studying, and making up as fast as possible for the afternoon's recreation. Something in Christie's face, and even in his attitude, revealed the wretchedness of his heart; and though his eyes were fixed upon the book he held in his hand, Dabney observed that it was upside down.

It was not the first time, of late, that Dabney had noticed a cloud upon the brow of his young friend, and though it was not in his nature to ask for his confidence, he was sorry for him nevertheless, and had tried to think of a healing balm. Work was to him the panacea for many wounds. He had himself beguiled many an hour, which would otherwise have been wretched, with some favorite study. If Christie's mind were only more fully occupied, he argued, he would not feel so homesick and lonely.

"Christie," began Dabney with an abrupt-

ness which quite startled that wretched young person, "what is your favorite study?" It was very unusual for Dabney to speak during study hours, and now he actually had shut the big lexicon, and with both elbows leaning upon it was steadfastly gazing in Christie's face.

"Rushing," answered Christie playfully.

"Nonsense!" returned Dabney; "you don't like to run about any better than I do. You would much prefer to waste your time in my room building air-castles."

"And why should I not amuse myself in that way as well as any other?" questioned Christie.

"Because it is a most foolish and harmful habit. It makes the stern duties of life distasteful to us; and there is too much real work in the world to waste any portion of our short existence in idle dreams of what we might do if we were differently situated."

"I know, Dabney, you believe in all work and no play; but do you remember what effect that had on poor Jack?"

"It made him a dull boy, the rhyme tells us," answered Dabney, "and it was even more disastrous to me, for by it I became a selfish boy.

We all require diversion, it is true, but it should be of a healthful and invigorating character, tending to strengthen instead of weaken us. When we have time for meditation, let the subject be God's greatness and glory rather than our own, and I am sure we shall be the happier as well as the better for it."

Here Dabney paused, and Christie thought of the many hours in his life which he had thrown away as it were. At length he said, "I think you are right, Dabney. I wish my thoughts were less frivolous and trifling."

"You don't study enough, for one thing," said Dabney bluntly.

"I learn my lessons," answered Christie.

"Well enough to keep your place in your class, perhaps, because you are very quick, and the boys generally are careless; but why don't you try to thoroughly master some one study, natural history, for instance; all boys like that."

Christie shook his head, to denote that he was an exception to most boys.

"Well, there is Latin. Mr. Hunnewell tells me you don't stand very well in the class. How is that?"

Christie blushed. "I know," said he, "that I must make a very stupid appearance; but, to tell you the truth, Dabney, all the disagreeable boys in school belong to that class, and they confuse me so I can't make a respectable recitation, however well I may know my lesson. I wrote to my aunt not long ago complaining of this very difficulty, and this morning I received a letter from her, in which she says that I ought to overcome my nervousness, and as an incentive to exertion, as she calls it, she proposes to make me a handsome present at the end of the term if, by my reports, I average the highest marks in the class."

"And you will make the effort, of course," said Dabney.

"It would be of no use," answered Christie.

"Come round here and translate this," returned Dabney, pointing to a passage in the book which lay open on his lap.

It was while he was complying with this request that Phil passed, and both of the boys, looking up, caught his scornful expression.

"You must not come here any more," said Dabney, shoving his chair off as far as possible.

"Phil does not like it, and he is your oldest friend."

"He does not care in the least," answered Christie in all sincerity, trying to speak in a very calm and steady manner. "Something has happened that he don't understand, and he despises me. You are the only one in the school that doesn't shrink from me. Pray don't cast me off, too. I wont disturb you. Only let me come and sit with you the same as ever."

"What is the trouble?" asked Dabney, eagerly.

Christie hesitated. He did not know how to tell him without revealing how nearly he was concerned in his trouble.

"Never mind," said Dabney, noticing his embarrassment; "don't tell me if you don't wish to; but be sure of this, Christie, you can't be more glad to come here than I am to have you. It was only because I feared that you were getting unpopular by doing so that I asked you to keep away. I would rather live the old life again than have harm come to you through me."

"I wish I were home," sighed Christie.

"I thought you were trying to get over that sort of feeling, and taking a higher, broader view of school-life. God has placed your duty here. Do his work, then, cheerfully, undaunted by any trouble which the boys can bring upon you; and when you do go home, it will be with the knowledge that this has been the richest and best year of your life, for in it something has been accomplished, something done to bring you nearer to Jesus than ever before."

"I wish you had a home, too!" cried Christie.

'I wish I had," said Dabney sadly.

"I have thought of something!" exclaimed Christie in great excitement. "Why can't you go home with me in the vacation, and spend the holidays with us? You know you said only the other day that you would be obliged to stay here. I know father and mother would be glad to see you."

"You forget," interrupted Dabney, smiling at his young friend's enthusiasm, "I haven't the money to travel."

"O I can manage that! Father will send money enough for both of us."

Dabney's face flushed, and his pride took alarm in a moment. "I would not take your

father's money for the world. I will stay here, and take my pleasure in knowing that you are happy."

But Christie had hit upon a delightful plan, and was not ready to give it up. He wanted Dabney to see his beautiful home, and enjoy it with him, instead of drudging alone through the holidays. "Would you take the money if it were mine?" he questioned.

"If you were a man of property," laughed Dabney. "I am sure I like you well enough to be willing to place myself under obligations to you; but as all the money you have now is what your father chooses to give you, I should not feel comfortable to take it. Let us put off the trip a few years."

"I am not going to wait," answered Christie, "for I have thought of a way out of our difficulty. Since you will take only the money that is mine, I will earn some."

"Not by snaring!" cried Dabney in alarm.

"No; I will earn the present my aunt promises me if I obtain the highest marks in the class. I am sure she would just as soon give me money as any thing else, and I can buy a visitor with it. Please, Dabney, say that you

agree to that, for I have set my heart upon it."

Poor Dabney looked distressed. He left his chair and commenced to walk up and down the room, running his hands through his hair, as he always did when perplexed. At length he stopped before Christie, and said,

"I cannot go with you, for I never visit; I am not used to people, and should frighten any well-regulated family with my eccentricities. I should be much happier here with my books and occasional letters from you; but don't let that make any difference about the Latin lessons. Please earn the present for my sake, Christie."

"I wouldn't give a fig for it unless it were obtained for such an end. O that bell! it always rings just when we don't want to hear it. Heigho, Dabney, how jolly 'twill be to get home, where retiring-bells are unknown! But do tell me before I go that you will agree to my proposition. Now say yes, quick, or I shall be sure to get a bad mark for being late in the dormitory."

"I will think of it, and tell you in the morning," said Dabney.

Left to himself, he felt profoundly depressed. His pride, independence, and inclination all rebelled against compliance with his young friend's wishes, and yet from his stand-point it seemed the kindest thing he could do for Christie. The necessary exertion to obtain the gift would take his thoughts from all unpleasant subjects and comfort as well as improve him. He was willing to spend a portion of his precious time every day encouraging and assisting him, for he readily foresaw that he would need it. But the vacation! He wondered if it were his duty to give up that, too, and place himself under obligations to strangers. "O that Christie would only interest himself in some study without the sacrifice!" he murmured; and then he leaned his forehead on the table and groaned aloud as he thought of the selfishness with which he shrank from any act of self-denial. "I will go!" he exclaimed, emphasizing his words by a tremendous thump on the table; "no matter how distasteful to my feelings or repugnant to my pride, with God's help I will struggle through it."

In the mean time Christie, all unconscious of the trial he was imposing upon his friend,

was himself suffering from a species of tyranny which only boys can inflict.

He was running into the dormitory with a very fly-away sort of a look, occasioned by his haste to be there on time, when Johnson, who was sitting on the bed dragging off his boots, threw them at him, as if by accident.

"Take care, Johnson, you will squash our generous friend!" cried Briggs.

"That would be a pity," said Phil with a very sarcastic intonation. "There would be only tall mourning in that case;" and fearing he had whittled his pun to so fine a point that it would not be noticed, he added, for the benefit of the obtuse, "for no one would care but your bean-pole of a Dabney."

"You forget that Bonner's grief would be overwhelming. He isn't the youngster to forget an obligation."

"Perhaps he will be more reasonable than the rest of you, and not blame me for not giving what I do not possess," replied Christie.

"Sanguine disposition, I call that," laughed Johnson.

"I propose that you turn to the history of Ananias and Sapphira," remarked one as Chris-

tie took up his Bible; for he sorely needed consolation from some source, and had hurriedly undressed himself that he might have time to read from it before the lights were out. He knew the boys were making themselves merry at his expense, yet he did not heed them as he read the blessed words, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

CHAPTER XVII.

Phil's Revenge.

MANY hours after the laughing voices were stilled in sleep, Phil lay awake nursing his spiteful, wicked feelings toward his cousin, and trying to think of some suitable mode of avenging his wrongs, as he called them.

It was not until the following day, however, that he thought of the plan which he afterward adopted. It came to him in Dabney's room, for on being sent there by Dr. Grimshaw, he found him absent, and Christie the sole occupant of the apartment. He was sitting on the floor with his eyes concentrated on his book. Signs of great mental preoccupation were visible; his hair was all awry, his collar and necktie had been flung aside, while a daub of ink on his nose was more suggestive of hard work than of beauty. The Latin grammar, a huge lexicon, and other helps toward obtaining a clear understanding of the words of the im-

mortal Virgil, were not unobserved by Phil's keen glance. On discovering who was the occupant of the room he turned to go, but stopped on the threshold, his curiosity whetted by Christie's remarking that he had some good news to tell him.

"And what is it?" asked Phil rather fiercely.

"I have had a letter from Aunt Amelia, saying that she would be obliged to pass through here on her way to the mountains, and she thought she might stay over one train for the sake of seeing her delightful nephews," said Christie merrily.

"When did you hear?" inquired Phil, trying very hard not to betray his satisfaction at hearing the news.

"Yesterday. I should have told you before, only that unfortunate affair last evening drove it out of my head when I saw you. Were you very severely punished, Phil?"

"I should rather think so," growled he; "I have lost every Saturday as a holiday for the rest of the term, and a full account of the affair is to be forwarded to my father."

"I hope, now that you have had time to think it over, you do not blame me, for, of course, had

I known you were going to want the money, I would have saved it for you; but I gave it to Dabney, who has been very kind to me, how kind I can hardly tell you. Notwithstanding the many calls upon his time, he insists upon helping me with my Latin, for Aunt Amelia has promised me a present if my marks average higher than any other boy's in the class. When she comes, I shall tell her that I prefer money to any thing else she could give me, and with it I shall take Dabney home with me to pass the vacation. He is a real jolly fellow when one knows him well, and yesterday he really looked quite handsome—" He was going to add, "in the new coat I gave him," but he stopped short as he thought that perhaps it would be wiser not to mention that.

It would have been better if he had stopped sooner, for Phil was hardly in the frame of mind to sympathize with his cousin's plan, or rejoice in any pleasure which could accrue to Dabney.

Several hours later, while Christie was in the school-room, a little boy came to his desk saying that Dr. Grimshaw was waiting to see him in the study. He looked up in surprise. It was not often that a scholar received such a

message during recitation hours, and as he wiped his pen and prepared to leave his seat, he hastily reviewed his conduct, and tried to think wherein it had been amiss.

That something serious had occurred was evident to him the moment he saw Dr. Grimshaw's face. He was standing by the open window, reading a letter which Christie dimly felt was in some way connected with himself. "I will attend to you directly," said the Doctor, turning the sheet over and commencing to peruse it again from the beginning.

"Was it bad news from home?" Christie's heart almost stopped beating, and the minutes seemed liked hours before Dr. Grimshaw placed the letter in his hand, and told him to read it.

It was addressed to Dr. Grimshaw, and purported to be written by one of the farmers of the town. It contained a bitter complaint against a scholar, one Christie Randolph by name, who, it was alleged, had committed serious depredations in trampling down the wheat, and setting snares on his premises.

"Then you are guilty," said Dr. Grimshaw in a disappointed tone as Christie returned the sheet without comment.

What would he have given to be able to say that no part of the accusation was true! He could only assure him that he had not damaged any one's wheat, or in fact set snares but once since he had been in the school.

"Did you not know that it is the same thing as stealing to appropriate to yourself what the State forbids you to interfere with? I had hoped that this was a mistake. I had thought that some reflection of your father's nobility of character would be traceable in his son."

A mist had gathered before Christie's eyes, the floor seemed to rock under his feet, and he hardly heard what Dr. Grimshaw said; but he carried away with him a vague impression that he was dismissed from the room in disgrace, and forbidden to leave the house for the rest of the week.

He sat down on a bench in the hall and tried to calm his thoughts, and divest himself of the impression that it was his cousin who sent the letter. "Surely," he argued, "Phil is manly and honest; and even if he wished Dr. Grimshaw to know of my wrong-doing, he would not bring it about in such a cowardly, underhanded manner."

The writing certainly did not resemble Phil's,

but Christie recognized the paper the moment he took it up. It was pink-tinted, and matched exactly some of his own, which he had found in the writing-desk his mother had filled for him previous to leaving home. He remembered, too, that only a few days before Phil had complained of having no letter-paper, and, upon solicitation, he had given him a quire of the pink, because he had fancied the color of it. And what use had he made of it? As the truth became clearer to him, he felt more sorry for Phil than for himself. He had done wrong, and felt that he deserved the punishment which had overtaken him, and with singleness of heart, he prayed then and there that it might work out good in him rather than generate evil feelings toward one from whom he had expected kinder things.

"If Phil," he thought, "only possessed the Christian faith which he affects so to despise, it would have prevented him from committing such a meanness."

Christie was right. It would have caused him to enter joyously into Dabney's happiness, and shed a brightness and a charm over all his actions.

So Christie, though he knew who had been instrumental in bringing about his present disgrace, said nothing about it to any one, and tried, in doing his duty, to forget every thing unpleasant, and soon he was surprised to find how comparatively little he cared for the impression he was making upon others.

There was one circumstance, however, which gave him much pain. One bright sunny morning the Franklinites were just turning grudgingly to their books, longing the while to be out in the fresh morning air, when a carriage drove up the gravel path, and the loud ringing of the hall bell announced a visitor.

Christie's heart was almost in his mouth, for, expecting his aunt's arrival, he thought it must be she ; nor was he disappointed this time, for soon Dr. Grimshaw returned to the schoolroom, and with a sympathetic smile, told both Phil and himself that as their aunt was there the day for them might be a holiday. Phil was out of the room with a bound, leaving Christie hovering about the Doctor's desk.

"And why do you not go?" asked Dr. Grimshaw in surprise, seeing that Christie still stood before him.

"I wanted to ask you if I need stay in the house to-day," said Christie.

Dr. Grimshaw was a kind man, with a very tender heart, and he hesitated now; but he had already accorded him one favor, and he hardly felt that Christie's conduct of late justified his bestowing upon him another, yet he refused the desired permission with reluctance.

So Christie met his aunt with a cloud upon his brow. It soon cleared away, however, in the sunshine of her presence. It seemed so delightful to see a dear home face once more that he forgot for a time every thing unpleasant, and passed a very happy day, even though he was obliged to stay in the house, while Phil took his aunt over the grounds, and pointed out to her the beauties of the Franklin garden. Of course she inquired why Christie did not join them in this delicious ramble, and Phil, who was her informant, I am bound to say did not soften Christie's offense by the recital of it.

The boys were very fond of this aunt, who had their interests very much at heart. She truly rejoiced in their happiness, and was pained when any thing went wrong with them. She now thought that Christie did not look

well, and detected, with sorrow, the sad look which every now and then settled upon his face for a few moments, even in the midst of Phil's boisterous gayety. Something was wrong with her favorite, and she longed for the sweet assurance that he was still following Jesus. It did not seem to her a good omen when she heard that he had been breaking rules, for Christ implants in the hearts of his disciples submission, patience, and love.

On returning from the ramble in the garden there was no opportunity of talking with Christie upon the subject, though he told her of his intention to try and earn the present she had offered him, and asked her if she would be willing to give him money, which she readily agreed to do, and urged him to work stoutly for it. "It is work and prayer, my boy," she said, "which will make us worthy the name of Christians."

Christie had one great pleasure during the day, and that was in introducing his aunt to Dabney, who had created among the school-boys a great sensation, not unmixed with mirth, by appearing for the first time in the new coat, or in their elegant phraseology by bursting upon them without warning "in all the glaring splen-

dor of a long-tailed blue." They annoyed him intensely by their incessant inquiries as to whether he meditated cultivating a moustache and side tabs, or was setting up as a man without those elegant auxiliaries — remarks which Christie took to heart as much as his friend, for he thought Dabney looked very nice, and quite justified his Aunt Amelia's assertion that "he was a very gentlemanly-looking fellow."

How Christie envied Phil the privilege of going to the dépôt with his aunt, and thus securing another half hour of her society!

"You must take me now to Dr. Grimshaw," she said to Christie as Phil went to the dormitory to prepare himself for the drive; "I want to see him before I start." So Christie left her at the study-door, but he hovered near it that he might see her when she came out, and thereby obtain a few more words before she left and he went back again to the old routine.

Phil was to drive Dr. Grimshaw's buggy, and as, cap in hand, he went into the study to tell his aunt that it was already at the door, he caught enough of the conversation to learn the drift of it. The Doctor was saying, "He is

entirely free from that stubborn, self-sufficient spirit which is so hard for a teacher to control, but have you never remarked in your nephew a tendency to hoard money?"

"I never observed any thing of the kind," said his aunt; "indeed, we have always thought that Christie was particularly free from any such propensity."

"I am very glad to hear you say so, for I have feared that the circumstances which I have mentioned denoted such a disposition; but let us hope that it is not a deep-rooted inclination which will interfere with his happiness in future. It is my earnest purpose to understand my pupils, that I may assist them to overcome their faults while the character is pliant and capable of being molded at will."

There was no time for further conversation. Phil announced that he was ready to start, and after a few hurried words with Dr. Grimshaw, and an affectionate farewell in the hall to Christie, his aunt got into the carriage, and Phil, with a grand flourish of the whip, took a seat by her side and drove gayly down the carriage-path into the street beyond. Christie watched the buggy as it disappeared from view behind

the shrubbery, and felt very grateful for this little break in the monotony of his dull life.

Phil was in unusually fine spirits ; the brisk ride over the good hard road, and the fresh evening air, drawing its fragrance from a thousand different sources, exhilarated him, and he gayly narrated the details of his school-life for his aunt's benefit, making himself, as the center of interest, quite a hero, unmindful that he was having most of the conversation to himself.

"And now tell me something about your cousin," said his aunt at length, rousing herself from a reflection which did not seem to be of a very agreeable nature ; "does he appear happy here ? Do the boys like him, and are you as devoted friends as ever ?"

Phil paused ; it seemed cowardly and unprincipled, even to him, to malign one behind his back, especially as Christie would have no opportunity of righting himself in the estimation of his aunt. But the feeling of revenge which, untrammeled and unrestrained, had swayed him so long, and which he had never made the slightest effort to control, had now reached a giant growth and checked all kindly inclinations. "He does not deserve any good at my

hands," he thought, and so he took care not to say any, but assumed a diffidence and a disinclination to dwell upon the subject which he was far from feeling, and which his aunt interpreted as he intended.

"I am glad to see that you are unwilling to say any thing against your cousin, Phil. Christie has endeared himself to us all by a thousand lovely traits of character. I know him to be warm-hearted and truthful, and if he is led astray by unfit companions, or by the hardships of a life to which he is unaccustomed, it is your place, as his relative and oldest friend here, to influence him aright."

"I know it, Aunt Amelia," answered Phil artfully, "but Christie is so changed! He hardly seems the same boy that he was when he first came here. He don't care for me, now, and is completely under the influence of that tall fellow Dabney, who is an odd stick and fills him with all sorts of strange ideas, so that none of the boys can like him. He has grown so avaricious, too; only the other day one of the fellows in our dormitory was fined for setting snares, and though Christie had himself been with him, he would not lend him the money

when he knew the villagers might carry poor Bonner to jail in consequence. All the boys are disgusted with him, and I do not wonder at it."

This was the second time during the afternoon that his aunt had heard Christie accused of avarice by those whose opinion she respected. "It is very strange," said she. "I never observed that he had any undue regard for money;" but even as she spoke it passed through her mind that Christie had asked to have the present she had offered him in money in preference to any thing else. As she knew that his father liberally supplied him with pocket-money, it did not look well in conjunction with these stories. "It would be very wrong to encourage a miserly disposition," she thought, "and it is my duty to write Christie as soon as I get to my journey's end and revoke the promise I made to give him money." So she parted from Phil at the dépôt, and continued her journey with a heavy heart.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Disappointments.

THE ride home in the warm summer twilight gave Phil no pleasure, for memory was distinctly recalling his aunt's unhappiness and his own appalling sin. He tried to shake off these unpleasant impressions, and to think only of the enjoyments of the day; but God sometimes sends his Holy Spirit to cry in our hearts, "Turn ye! turn ye!" even as it was now pleading with Phil, who, not knowing the voice, was impatiently hushing its suggestions by saying to himself that "he had not done any thing so very dreadful, and that Christie was happier than he after all." This conclusion was far from wrong, for although in disgrace with his teachers, and all his school-fellows save one, he had drawn nigh to God, and He had fulfilled His promise, and drawn nigh unto him, and led him to a well-spring of strength and happiness. Now he was learning

the lesson of independence of man and a trust in a higher power, which he could never have gained in the smooth, sunny paths of his own home.

It was some weeks before Christie heard from his aunt. They were long weeks of constant labor in trying to make up for the lessons which had been but superficially learned during the earlier part of the term. He was just beginning to reap the advantages of his exertions, and feel assured that he should gain the money, when he received the strange letter wherein his aunt recalled her promise, stating that the detentions and fatigue of a long journey had alone deterred her from doing so sooner. It was very hard to give up the money after working so bravely, and making such fine progress.

At first he had despaired of overcoming his natural diffidence and timidity at reciting before so many watchful faces, for Phil had told the boys, with a knowing nod, that so much devotion to the ancients wasn't for nothing, and incited many by his example to annoy his cousin in every possible manner: quizzing him when he commenced to recite, laughing at his blunders, coughing ominously when he did him-

self great credit, and distracting his attention by cracking nuts like a squirrel, or in mimicking Mr. Hunnewell under that gentleman's very nose, until Christie hardly knew what he was about. After a time, however, he understood that it was done to annoy him, and no longer paid any attention to what was going on around him, for every lesson was recited first to Dabney, and his assurance that he really knew it gave him a confidence never felt before ; besides, his self-constituted teacher inspired him with his own love of the language, and he was amazed to find how much of beauty there was in it, and how much real interest he felt in the history of Dido, Xenius, Anchises, and their contemporaries. They were in his mind so much that they became to him realities, and it was a real pleasure to recite and talk about them to a sympathetic admirer like Mr. Hunnewell ; yet to master any language completely necessitates hours of weary drudgery, and many a pleasant afternoon, which he would have been glad to while away out-of-doors, he had spent laboring to implant the rules of Andrews and Stoddard in his mind.

"And had his exertions been for naught?

Was there to be no end to his disappointments — to these commonplace trivialities — which, however insignificant they might appear to another, were sore trials to him ?"

Some such questions he asked Dabney as they took their walk together one afternoon. Christie had dreaded to tell him that his aunt had refused the money lest it might be as great a disappointment to him as it was to himself; but he was comforted on that score when he perceived the real relief that was depicted upon his friend's face on hearing the news.

"It would have been of great benefit to me to go home with you, I do not doubt, Christie, yet I dreaded it more than you can understand; so don't feel sorry on my account, but continue with your studies, and the consciousness of having persevered through every disappointment will be no mean reward."

"But I prayed that I might succeed for your sake, and God has promised to answer prayer."

"Not always in the way you expect, for in that case the Almighty would be guided by you, and be following your counsels rather than having you follow his. As long as we are in the world, I believe, we must suffer disappoint-

ments and trials; but if we only use them right, they are guides to the higher life above."

"There are some people who don't seem to have any trials," said Christie.

"They are few, indeed, who don't have troubles of some kind; but God has provided for even those, for has he not said, 'Bear ye *one another's* burdens?' Let us rest awhile," continued Dabney, sitting himself, Turk fashion, on the grass.

"You look quite like the *genius* of the place," said Christie.

"Like a fairy?" inquired Dabney.

"More like a big grasshopper," replied Christie, with exemplary frankness as he regarded his long arms and legs; "and here is a beetle of the same opinion, who is coming to make your acquaintance."

"And very glad I am to see him," said Dabney, catching it with a big leaf and inspecting it with interest. "Now, Christie, if you had made natural history a specialty this half, as I recommended, you would know that this is a very rare species of beetle in this part of the country. I don't see how the poor fellow came here, any way. He must be some enterprising

traveler abroad, 'strange countries for to see.'"

"I wish you would give it to me if it is rare, for Phil would be delighted to add it to his collection;" and Christie forthwith wrapped it very tenderly and carefully in his pocket-handkerchief for safe keeping.

"Talk about people, and they are sure to appear," remarked Dabney, not looking specially pleased as Phil hove in sight, followed by his usual retinue. "Let us be off, Christie;" and he picked himself up and stared at the clouds in the vain endeavor to appear unconscious of the hostile party's approach.

"Yes, presently," returned Christie, pulling Phil's coat when he passed him, as if they were on the best possible terms, and, holding up the handkerchief for his inspection, he remarked that it contained a very rare beetle, Dabney had told him, and he had saved it for his collection.

Phil's passion for beetles had become a standing joke between them. He had hunted, talked about, and slaughtered the unoffending insects hours together, and now he languished for this one; perhaps, had no one been by, he

would have compromised his dignity sufficiently to accept the tempting gift; but the boys being present, especially Dabney, whose presence particularly aggravated him, he turned on his heel with a laugh, and remarked that he was very generous with his bugs.

"And that reminds me," answered Christie, "I promised to treat the boys of our dormitory when I had money again, and as father has sent me some this week, I hold to my engagement; so Saturday, after the baker's cart has been round, I will give you the best spread I can get up."

Lawton's upper lip curled with scorn as he heard this invitation; he thought that he understood the motive which prompted it, and intended to defeat Christie's object when he observed that he was sure the fellows would not tax his generosity so far.

Bonner looked as if he did not feel so sure of that; the invitation had a very pleasant sound to him, and consequently he telegraphed signs of disapproval to Lawton.

"Please excuse me from coming," said Phil coldly. "And me," "and me," was echoed from all sides. Seeing that the cause was very un-

popular, Bonner cried, "and me," loudest of all, though he couldn't repress a sigh which told how harassing it was to his feelings.

"The spread will be ready any way, and if you change your minds," said Christie, "I shall be glad to see you;" and he started off with Dabney, looking very sober and troubled.

"I should not care if they didn't come," said Dabney consolingly; "if they give out you can invite some of the little fellows, who will be much more civil and grateful."

CHAPTER XIX.

Christie's Feast.

AS good as his word, Christie prepared his little feast for such of the invited guests as would accept of his hospitality, and made great exertions that it should be on as grand a scale as his small means would allow.

Dabney had a large study-table in his room, and for that reason Christie had asked him for the loan of the apartment on this occasion, and had spent several hours in assisting his friend to adorn it. Very lovely they made it by festooning the walls with evergreens, and filling up all bare, ugly places with mottoes made of wild flowers, which beautified and transformed the room so that one would never recognize it as "Dabney's den."

Then Christie had a couple of chickens cooked by old Aunt Hetty, a village woman of great celebrity among the school-boys on account of her culinary skill. Biscuits, fresh butter, and pickles were also furnished by this

excellent caterer, besides a huge plum-cake, beautifully ornamented with frosting, which, as Christie remarked when he took it from the basket, would give great style to the board. It was also admired by Dabney, who, though he could not be present at the entertainment, took as much pride in the arrangements as Christie.

All things being ready on the eventful day, excepting what the baker was to bring, Christie watched for the big red cart with some anxiety, and was greatly relieved to hear the jingling of bells which heralded its approach. It drew up before the play-ground, and the boys crowded around it like flies about a honey-pot.

"Here's a customer!" cried Christie, squeezing through the throng; "two dozen hot apple turn-overs, and two dozen cranberry tarts."

"Them's 'em, my hearty!" cried the fat little baker, beaming with delight at such an unexpected sale of his wares. "Have some doughnuts, too? They are uncommon good, I know, for my daughter Sal made 'em."

"Yes, and some jumbles and jelly-cake!" cried Christie, growing lavish at the sight of those dainties.

"What is going on?" asked Whitehouse of

Lawton as from their post of observation they saw Christie filling up a basket with his purchases.

"Why, did you not know Randolph treats our dormitory to-day? We are all invited, and it's to be a regular spread-eagle affair. Silly boy! I suppose he is trying to buy back his popularity; but, fortunately, meanness wont go down in this institution," said Lawton with pride.

"I never knew a fellow lose caste as that one has," returned Whitehouse. "When he first came here every one seemed disposed to like him."

"And now, teachers as well as scholars are disgusted," said Lawton. "You ought to have seen Grim when he heard that he refused to lend Bonner that money. We were together sitting at the upper end of the school-room, when two of the boys were talking about it just under the window. Of course, we had the benefit of the conversation. Dr. Grimshaw looked very sober, and asked me if it were indeed so; and though I did not wish to admit it to a teacher, I was forced to do so."

"Perhaps if we knew his motive for keeping

back the money we might not blame him," returned Whitehouse, the charitable.

"I should think so, too, if it were not for Phil, who is very fond of his cousin, and would not treat him as he does if he were not convinced that he merited it."

Happily unconscious of these remarks, Christie, with his load of goodies, trudged back to Dabney's room, followed by the wistful gaze of many a hungry boy. He found Dabney cutting up lemons with a jack-knife, and, in lieu of something better, making the lemonade in the pitcher from the wash-stand. "It is clean," said Dabney apologetically.

"All right," returned Christie, who wasn't more fastidious than most boys. "But what shall we do for tumblers? One can eat without a plate, but it is necessary to have some kind of a dish to drink from."

"Pitcher," suggested Dabney.

Christie shook his head dismally.

"I have it," said Dabney at length, going to the closet and producing therefrom an old shaving-cup which some former occupant of the room had left there.

"Just the thing!" returned Christie joyfully,

"and here we are ready just in time. I hope they will come before the pastry cools," he continued, swelling with hospitable pride as he glanced at the smoking-hot turn-overs.

"I had better decamp, then," said Dabney, picking up a book and taking a parting survey of the room as he left it.

There was a good deal of walking up and down the hall, but as no one seemed to be coming in, Christie sat down to wait for his party to arrive, and tried to feel that it was not a trying ordeal which he was about to undergo. Presently he heard whispering voices just outside the door, but instead of the expected knock, an eye was visible at the key-hole. Christie, springing to the door, opened it only in time to see a crowd of boys tumbling around the corner. It was very annoying to be watched, so he put the key in the lock on the inside, and, taking up a book, was determined to interest himself in it until some one of his guests arrived; but that was no easy thing to do, for it was soon evident by the loud whispering outside that the boys were at the door again; then came a sharp knock and the sound of retreating footsteps.

"I wont run after them," he thought, trying to argue himself into the idea that it would be no disappointment to him if they did not come in, and in proof thereof he hummed a merry song; but somehow it did not go off very briskly, and at the end of a couple of hours of waiting he confessed to himself that he was not only disappointed but mortified at the result of his invitations.

At this juncture Dabney, who had spent the time very profitably in the school-room, appeared at the door. He looked in astonishment first at Christie, and then at the table, which still shone forth in all its pristine glory.

"No one has been here," said Christie in a doleful tone.

Dabney threw back his head, opened his wide mouth to a fearful extent, and gave vent to a hearty roar.

"It is very unkind of you to laugh!" cried Christie, looking rather injured.

"So it is," returned Dabney, "but I couldn't help it," and he made a great effort to draw down his face into a sympathetic expression. "What's the use," he continued, "of looking so

bereaved? Wait until you have some real affliction before you put on mourning. Why not regard the affair as a joke, and go forthwith and invite some one that will come? There are the little boys playing tag on the front lawn, they wont need a second bidding, I assure you."

"I am afraid I have made myself a laughing-stock," sighed Christie.

"I would not be afraid of any thing but sin," answered Dabney seriously. "You have done nothing wrong; indeed, as you promised to treat the fellows, I don't see how you could have done otherwise, so cheer up."

"You are a real comfort," returned Christie, brightening up. "Let us this time invite the smallest, most neglected youngsters in school."

The fame of Christie's repast had traveled before him, and great was the astonishment and delight of the little boys that it was destined for them. The profound O's, and other exclamations of satisfaction, which fell from their lips on entering the room, though not of a reportable character, sounded very pleasant to Christie, and quite repaid him for all his labor. He and Dabney busied themselves at once in help-

ing their uproarious guests—the latter admonishing the little fellows not to kill themselves with eating too much cake, and tucking handkerchiefs under their chins, in lieu of napkins, in such a motherly way that Christie stopped hacking up the chicken to laugh. In fact, every one was in tip-top spirits, and all would have passed off very merrily had not one of the boys commenced to cry.

"What's the matter?" asked Dabney in astonishment.

"Some one is throwing water on me from behind," replied the child, wiping his neck with his sleeve.

"Nonsense! that is imagination," Dabney was saying, when a stream of hot water was squirted from the key-hole into his face.

"It is somebody outside!" said one.

"I saw him shut the door!" cried another.

"Saw whom?" asked Dabney, livid with rage.

"Bonner," replied the child.

"O don't go!" said Christie, seeing that Dabney was about to leave the room. "You will only get into trouble."

But Dabney was off without a word.

"O, boys, have you not almost finished?"

This inhospitable query was answered by a clamorous demand for more tart, so that Christie was forced to remain and perform the duties of host, instead of running after his friend, as he felt much inclined to do.

It seemed to him that he never should see the last of the "small fry," who stayed until they had swept the board, taking off in their pockets what could not be otherwise disposed of.

Dabney appeared just as they left. He came into the room rubbing some ink stains from his coat—the precious coat which had been the cause of so much trouble to Christie.

"How did it happen?" asked Christie in consternation.

"It is some of the work of Bonner and of Phil," answered Dabney. "I caught them with a huge ink bottle, the contents of which they did not hesitate to declare they intended to squirt into this room, and to return the delicate attention I gave them each a thrashing which they are not likely to forget."

"And then they threw the ink upon you?" inquired Christie.

"Yes," returned Dabney, ruefully eyeing the big, ugly stains.

Christie said nothing, but slowly commenced to clear the table and put things into their respective places.

"I hope you don't mind because I struck Phil," observed Dabney. "I should have spared him, as he is your cousin, only he must needs interfere when I was tussling with Bonner. He has not been cultivating his biceps all this time for nothing, and his clutch didn't feel pleasant;" and Dabney gave a short laugh at the recollection.

Christie looked at the coat, and confessed that Phil abundantly deserved a thrashing; "Only I wish you had not given it to him," he added. "I don't doubt that I should have done exactly as you did, but it isn't Christ-like to fight, Dabney."

"But what would you have had me do? Surely it is not my duty tamely to submit to every thing."

"You may call it tame, or whatever you like, but we ought to bear and forbear, and nothing in Christ's life is more conspicuous, and at greater variance with the times and the customs of the country in which he lived, than his meekness and humility. He also says upon this

very subject, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.' There can be no mistake about that. It is as plain as words can make it; and though it may be very hard to do, I have heard father say that it is part of the discipline which is to fit us for heaven."

"I suppose he is right," answered Dabney, "and it is indeed hard. I wonder if I can ever feel as a true Christian should, and be able to say with the Psalmist, 'I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart?'"

"The more we do right the better we shall love it, I suppose," said Christie.

Dabney took his little Bible from the shelf, and, turning to Paul's instructions to the Galatians, read, 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' That don't sound much like fighting, does it, Christie? Well, I am sorry I did it, but I can't help it now."

"You might say so to the boys," suggested Christie.

The rich blood mounted to Dabney's face, and even dyed his neck and hands. "You forget that I am teacher," he returned.

"The boys don't regard you as such out of recitation hours," said Christie.

Dabney did not reply at once, but sat idly watching his friend as he finished putting the furniture in place about the room. Finally he broke out with the following question, "What would be the use in it?"

Christie knew at once what he meant, and answered, "The use would be that we are commanded to do so. Then, again, if we make it a practice always to confess it when we do wrong, it is such a disagreeable penalty that it may serve as a preventive; at least it has proved so to me. The fact is, I am so prone to do evil that I have to try all sorts of contrivances to keep me in the right."

"But I don't want to be such a Christian as that," said Dabney discontentedly. "I want to do right because it is right, and because I delight in goodness."

"In other words," answered Christie, "you want to do right without an effort. I don't believe you ever can, Dabney. You know how much the apostles wrote about warring with evil. I am sure they had to try to do right just as hard as we;" and Christie looked into his

friend's face so earnestly and encouragingly that Dabney exclaimed with enthusiasm,

"I am glad, Christie, you have decided to be a minister, for I believe you will make a good one. At all events, you have preached it into me that I ought to confess to those boys that I was wrong, and I am going to do so at once, while my courage is high and my heart softened by your kindness and affection."

CHAPTER XX.

A Revelation.

IT was no pleasant duty which Dabney had now undertaken to perform, and as he went from room to room searching for Bonner and Phil he almost wished that he might not find them, and thus feel justified in putting off the disagreeable confession a few hours at least.

It was not so much that Dabney objected to own that he had done wrong as that he feared his motive in doing so would be misconstrued. What more likely than that the boys should think he was trying to conciliate them through fear?

But these thoughts did not deter him from entering one of the recitation-rooms on hearing Phil's high-pitched voice within as he was passing the door.

Evidences of strife were still discernible upon his person. Stripped to his shirt-sleeves, he

was giving a very animated account of his agility to the crowd of listeners that surrounded him, and scouting with scorn the hints that he had been worsted in his late encounter with Dabney. "If I could only have another round I would knock him flat," he was saying, when, looking up, he perceived Dabney leaning against the wall, watching him with an expression upon his countenance which he failed to understand.

A loud laugh arose from the boys at the critical position of affairs, and no one was surprised when Dabney asked for Bonner. "I have something to say to you both," he added.

After a whispered consultation with Johnson, Phil agreed to go with him and find Bonner, and the two left the room together.

"I want to say to him as well as to you that I am sorry for having fought with you. It is dreadful to think what might have been the consequences, for I was very angry, and did my best to hurt you. Will you forgive me, and shake hands?" and Dabney held out his own hand and looked steadfastly into Phil's face.

If he could have read his heart he would have seen that this manly, honest acknowledgment smote Phil with shame. He looked at

the poor struggling fellow at his side, who was so uncomplainingly combating the ills which poverty had brought upon him, and he felt conscience-stricken that from his vantage-ground he had stooped to cast a stone at him; but Phil had not failed to see that Dabney had daily gathered hope and strength from Christie's friendship. Indeed, Dabney had taken Christie entirely from Phil, and the thought brought back the old current of selfish feeling and the old enmity again.

"I have nothing to forgive," he answered sullenly, withholding his hand. "If you are disturbed because you think you got the best of it we will try again, and perhaps you may have cause to feel uncomfortable on another score."

"I don't want to fight," answered Dabney sorrowfully. "I feel humiliated that my passions got the better of me before. But O, Spencer, it was very hard to feel that my few possessions were to be ruined for your amusement. I should have remembered that you never had been poor, and did not realize what it is to be utterly without the means of replacing what is destroyed."

"You might apply to Christie again," remarked Phil in an insinuating tone as they descended the stairs together.

"What do you mean?" returned Dabney, stepping in front of him, and blockading the way by placing one arm on the baluster and the other upon the opposite wall.

"You seem very much shocked," laughed Phil. "It seems like speaking out in meeting, doesn't it? Well, it *is* pleasanter to accept money than to talk about it, I don't doubt!"

"I never accepted a penny from Christie in my life, if that is what you are driving at," said Dabney decidedly.

"I have only Christie's word for it," answered Phil. "I hope your little friend hasn't told a naughty story."

"Did Christie say that he had given me money?" asked Dabney incredulously.

"He certainly gave me to understand that you took thirteen dollars from him at one time. It was the excuse he made me for not lending me some money when I asked for the loan of it to pay Bonner's fine. You see I know all about it, so there need be no secrets between us."

"You are mistaken!" cried Dabney quickly.

"I don't believe Christie has had that amount since I have known him; at all events, I am sure he has been very much pinched for spending-money all the term."

Phil laughed a provoking, satirical little laugh as he replied, "The boys saw it in his pocket-book only a short time previous to my calling upon him for it; and it was because they knew that he had the money when he denied it that he has become so unpopular among them."

"I don't see how they could blame him if it was understood that he gave the money to me," said Dabney, distrusting the whole story.

"O the fellows knew nothing of that!" returned Phil.

The two regarded each other a few moments in a puzzled way, each believing that the other was trying to deceive. Yet Phil looked as if he were speaking the truth, and his words rang in Dabney's ear hours after he had apologized to Bonner and left both of them.

Just before the retiring-bell rang that night, Christie hurried into Dabney's room with a small bottle in his hand. "It contains an extract warranted to take out ink spots," he explained as Dabney looked inquiringly at it.

"I saw it in the dormitory, and borrowed it on your account; so let me use it forthwith, that I may carry it back with me when I go."

Dabney took off the coat as he was requested, and Christie, after wetting the small sponge which he took from his pocket with the liquid, applied it to the damaged parts, while Dabney's thoughts went back to that bright, happy day when, unexpectedly, he had received such a welcome addition to his slender wardrobe. He remembered that afternoon's walk to W——. The early roses that were then in blossom, and which brightened the way, were indeed withered and gone, and late autumnal flowers bloomed in their stead, but the happiness and comfort which then sprang up in his heart still lived and gladdened his life. He thought, too, of Christie's simple, untiring devotion, and the trouble and annoyances which came to him about that time, and at last he linked them together. Could it be that Christie had spent the money which Phil declared that he possessed at the time for the coat and vest, and, out of consideration for his feelings, suffered a thousand persecutions from his comrades rather than acknowledge the fact? Such unselfishness

seemed incredible to him; and yet, as he hastily reviewed every circumstance connected with the anonymous gift, he felt convinced that it was even so; and catching Christie by the shoulders, at the imminent risk of upsetting the bottle which he held in his hand, he looked earnestly into his face, and exclaimed,

"You did it!"

"Did what?" asked Christie in surprise.

"You gave me the coat and vest, and I am ashamed and disgusted with my stupidity in not guessing it before. I can never forgive myself, for by it you have suffered so much! Do you suppose I should have permitted you to bear disgrace to save my pride?" and the tears which Dabney would have felt no shame to let fall stood in his eyes.

Christie flushed with both pain and pleasure. He was sorry that Dabney had made such a discovery, and yet it was a real pleasure to know that he appreciated all he had borne for his sake; but he now made light of the trouble it had been to him, and declared, with truth, that he had derived a great deal more happiness than pain from the affair.

"But you shall suffer no longer on my ac-

count," replied Dabney; "I should rather the boys would know how the money was spent."

Christie would not agree to that, and was warmly arguing the point when the bell rang which called him away.

Dabney sat at the open window of his room, hours after Christie left him, indulging in solitude the thoughts to which this conversation had given rise. He remembered when the term had opened what a comfortless blank reality life had seemed to him, and now how differently he felt; and fervently he hoped that never again might he lose faith and trust in the Being who watched over and guided his destiny, and who had raised up a friend for him who by the nobility and generosity of his nature might elevate his own. Nor did he forget to pray for strength to emulate his example of unselfishness.

CHAPTER XXI.

Triumph.

IT was so dark in the school-room that the scholars could hardly see to study, and many a bright eye was turned away from the page before it to watch the rain as it fell in torrents against the window-panes. All terrestrial objects seemed to be swamped in a general deluge. Certainly there would be no play out-of-doors for the present. As the clock struck twelve Dr. Grimshaw rang the bell—the signal that the morning session was over—and taking up his hat, he left the room.

The boys came flocking in from the surrounding recitation-rooms to put up their books, and a merry clatter of voices and the slamming of desk covers filled the room with a tumultuous uproar, when, to every one's amazement, the bell was touched again, and Dabney, pale and determined, begged the attention of the school for a few moments.

There was something of dignity and firmness

in his face and very attitude, as he stood at the teacher's desk, that claimed the attention which he had just solicited, and quiet was instantly restored.

"I wont keep you long," he began, "but I don't know when I shall have a better opportunity of clearing up a little mystery which has made one among us very unhappy during the long term."

The boys looked at one another inquiringly, and a few jokes were cracked on the score of Dabney's being about to make a speech; but these were soon silenced by the others, whose curiosity was awakened by the unusual spectacle.

It was no easy matter for one of Dabney's reticent habits to lay bare his private affairs before his careless companions, and his voice wavered slightly as he proceeded:

"At the opening of the term a more unhappy person could hardly be found than I. Without money or friends, or a faith in the justice and love of God, I felt there was nothing to hope for, nothing to care for but my own selfish schemes. Who shall say that I should not have hardened into a bad, unscrupulous man had

not one noble fellow,—God bless him!—by his kindness and sympathy turned my thoughts from myself?

"He never laughed at my oddities, or seemed to notice my poverty; and when, on the day that Bonner was fined, I received an anonymous present of the coat and vest I now wear, I never dreamed that it was his gift, or that the ban which he seemed to be under in the school was in any way connected with me."

Here Dabney paused. Not a sound was to be heard in the school-room save the dull pattering of the rain as it struck upon the roof, but every eye was fixed on Dabney, and every one's attention chained.

"Boys," continued he, his color deepening and his countenance brightening, "all the money which you supposed Christie Randolph had at that time was in the possession of the tailor at W——, and no one in the school, with the exception of Phil Spencer, was ever told by the patient fellow that the money was given to me. And why? Because the generosity which prompted the gift scorned to shift its wound upon another. Christie Randolph would rather bear misconstruction, rudeness, and dis-

grace himself than hurt the sensitive pride of a friend."

How Dabney would have concluded his speech was never known, for his voice was drowned in a sea of applause.

"Where is he? What has become of the youngster?" was echoed from one to the other, for Christie, standing near the door of the school-room as Dabney commenced his speech, soon discovered the drift of it, and, perceiving that his praises were to be sung, slipped quietly from the room.

"Let us give three cheers for him!" cried one; and immediately the air was rent with boyish voices.

"And three for Dabney!" cried Whitehouse, stepping forward and cordially shaking his hand. His example was followed by many others, all eager to testify their admiration of his frankness, and their readiness to be friends with him, now they knew that he really cared for their friendship.

"Dabney is a splendid fellow," said Lawton, speaking afterward of the scene to his companions, "and I wish I had understood him better before. Who would suppose that Christie Ran-

dolph would have had so much more discrimination than the rest of us?"

"I suspect that he had no more discrimination, but a greater desire to be of use," replied Whitehouse. "If we only try to help those about us, it is surprising how many pleasant unsuspected traits come to light, which were hidden from our view at first by faults and oddities."

"I wouldn't have believed that Phil Spencer would have been so mean," said Fish-ball; "when he knew his cousin to be unjustly blamed, he could at least have espoused his cause, and satisfied us by doing so that he was in the right."

"After all," said Johnson, "how much more one can respect and admire a fellow with principle, for without it, though he may be bright and jolly as Phil, there can be no dependence placed upon him, no surety that he is acting justly and honorably even by those he loves. However, let us not put all the blame upon Phil, but take a just share of it ourselves for being so ready to judge a school-fellow uncharitably."

"Poor Christie has had a hard time," said

Lawton, "and we must do all in our power in the future to compensate him for our past unkindness. Dr. Grimshaw is delighted that his character is vindicated, I hear."

"O yes," answered Fish-ball. "I met him in the hall after we had been cheering Christie and Dabney, and he asked me very sternly what all that uproar was about in the school-room. When I told him his face brightened, and I really believe he would have liked to cheer too; but instead he told me to find him and bring him into the study, which I did, and heard him talk beautifully to him, thanking him for his kindness to Dabney, and begging him, through good and evil, always steadfastly to trust to that higher Power which had carried him so successfully through the trials of his first term. 'None,' said he, 'are so humble but they can do some good; none but in their hearts have a giant capacity for making others happy.'

"I suppose it was to celebrate the occasion that Grim invited Dabney, Christie, Phil, and myself to take tea with him in the study, where we had a cosy little tuck-out all by ourselves. The Doctor was uncommonly jolly, and entertained us with funny stories until we all laughed

till the tears ran down our cheeks, excepting Phil, who wore a very hang-dog look, and appeared uncomfortable and ill at ease, especially when Dr. Grimshaw asked him the address of that aunt who was here this term."

Phil was indeed unhappy, for nothing weighs so heavily upon the heart as guilt. He had failed, too, in attaining the end for which he had condescended to deceive his aunt, and he knew that Dr. Grimshaw wished her address only to rectify the wrong impression he had made concerning Christie. Phil did not doubt that when she knew the truth she would do all in her power to encourage and aid Christie in his efforts to assist his friend.

What had he gained by the course he had pursued? Certainly nothing; but he had lost his self-respect, and was burdened with the constant fear that his aunt would know that he purposely misled her.

When in his anger he had flung in Dabney's teeth his indebtedness to Christie, he little foresaw what would be the result. He had not counted upon the moral force and courage which religion brings. He thought Dabney's pride would forbid his mentioning the subject,

and was quite dumbfounded when he stood before the whole school and confessed his poverty and indebtedness.

Whenever boys recognize *real* goodness, *real* generosity or bravery, in their hearts they honor it, for it is godlike, and they cannot help it. It is their counterfeit, cant and hypocrisy, that they dread, and are so impatient of, and Phil never liked his cousin better, or respected Dabney more, than now that they were tried and not found wanting. How mean and contemptible his conduct and his aims seemed as he compared them with theirs; for though Phil had lately closed his heart to all good influences, they were not entirely lost upon him. It touched him sorely that now, when the whole school was ringing with Christie's praises, and all the boys were vying with each other in showing him kindness, and in striving to obliterate past troubles from his mind, that he was not forgetful of him, but sought in every way to heal the breach between them, and heartily he wished that he had never injured him, and that they were friends once more; but he had many and many a pang of remorse to contend with, many an hour of sorrow and

shame, ere he could confess as much to him and receive his forgiveness.

And Christie? Was he sorry now that he had left home; that he had sacrificed his feelings to duty; that he had striven faithfully to do right through the long weary half year; sometimes failing, it is true, but, trusting in a Saviour's love for forgiveness, had struggled on through trials to triumph? Pleasantly did the kindly voices of his companions fall upon his ear; sweet it was to know that he had gained the approval of his teachers, but the happiest thought of all was that Christ, the unfailing resource for human strength, was as ready in the future as he had been in the past to extend his mercy and protection.

Summer and autumn had passed away, and with it Christie's trouble. It was breaking-up day at the Franklin Institute—the time so ardently longed for during the long, weary term, and so welcome now that it had arrived. Wild snatches of song and merry laughter resounded through the hall, for were not many boyish hearts bounding with the thought of soon being home? Christie, in particular, felt so

glad and happy that he could hardly finish packing his things, and stopped every few moments to stamp a chorus to the air Phil was trolling somewhat out of time.

"When shall we three meet again?" asked Dabney, who had come into the dormitory to be with his friend as long as possible before his departure, and was trying to expedite the business on hand by neatly writing Christie's address on a card to tack upon the trunk without delay.

"Early next term," replied Christie, "which promises to open much smoother and pleasanter than this one did. The only regret I feel now is that I am leaving you to plod through the vacation alone."

"O don't mind that, for I do not," answered Dabney cheerfully. "I feel as happy as a king;" and his kindly look did not belie his words. "After all, Christie, when we are at peace with ourselves it doesn't make so much difference where we are, we can't fail to be happy and contented."

Phil blushed. It might have been the effect of Dabney's words, or unpleasant association connected with the pink-tinted paper which

he was that moment packing in his writing-desk. "Has the morning mail arrived?" asked he.

"I think so," returned Dabney, strapping the trunk, and then putting his arm through Christie's for a parting stroll.

"I am glad I have worked hard at my Latin," said Christie as he slowly paced up and down the long hall for the hundredth time, "for though Aunt Amelia has retracted her promise to give me the money, there is a satisfaction in knowing that I should have earned it if she had not done so. Never mind, next term I hope something may occur which may enable you to spend the vacation with me."

"I think something has already," said Dabney, "for Dr. Grimshaw told me this morning that in future he should pay me a salary besides my board and tuition, as I was really valuable to him."

Christie was just about to congratulate him upon his good fortune when Phil came rushing up to him with a letter, which he put into his hand, saying, with great volubility,

"It is all right now, Christie! I thought it would be when Aunt Amelia knew the truth

We can all take the noon stage, so go quickly, Dabney, and get ready."

"What is he talking about?" asked Dabney.

"O how jolly!" exclaimed Christie as he read the letter, which proved a good key to Phil's excited incoherency. "Here is the money, Dabney; Aunt Amelia has sent it, after all, and says that she should not have taken back her promise had she not been led to suppose that I was cultivating an avaricious spirit; but that Dr. Grimshaw had proved to her the mistake, and she says she is glad to award the money to one so worthy of it."

"I wonder how she knew I had earned it?" continued Christie musingly.

"I wrote her," Phil answered, almost shyly.

"How kind of you!" said Christie, and his eyes brightened with gratitude.

"You would not say that if you knew that it was I who purposely misled her."

"But you didn't," returned Christie.

"Yes I did; and what is more, I wrote an anonymous letter to Dr. Grimshaw, and signed it 'A Farmer.'"

"I knew it long ago," interrupted Christie, extending his hand.

"And didn't tell the Doctor?" answered Phil, hardly comprehending such forbearance. "I do believe, Christie, there is no humbug about your religion, and that it really makes you better and happier."

"It makes me happier, certainly," answered Christie thoughtfully.

"And it makes *me* ashamed of myself," said Phil; "and I wish you would let me prove it by doing something for you."

"Well, help me to get Dabney packed up in time to start with us," replied Christie.

"O no, I can't think of going!" returned Dabney in alarm.

"You promised to do so if I earned the money!" cried Christie, holding it above his head in triumph.

"Yes, but do let me off!" cried he beseechingly. "I am so shabby!" and he looked down at the coat, which, notwithstanding Christie's exertions, still bore unmistakable signs of hard usage.

"What mischief are you concocting now?" said Briggs. He was passing with a number of others, and stopped, attracted by the earnest countenances of the three.

"We are trying to coax Dabney to go home with us and pass the holidays," explained Christie.

"I shouldn't think he would need much coaxing," said Briggs.

"Nor should I," said Dabney, "but I am such a looking object to go visiting."

"Your coat doesn't look as well as it did," laughed Johnson, joining the group; "but since Phil helped to spoil it, I would make him lend me another one."

"I would willingly do so, but he couldn't squeeze into one of my coats to save his life," said Phil.

"I have a suit of clothes, which is at your disposal, hanging up in the closet at this very moment," said Lawton. "It would fit you 'to a t,' Dabney. I didn't pack it, because I never wear it, but if you would wear it I should be very glad."

"Let us make him!" laughed Johnson, bouncing upon him. And so, without further parley, the boys dragged him into the dormitory, and by force of numbers actually compelled him to don the broadcloth and fine linen. Moreover, Dabney's little trunk was

brought to light, and such articles of clothing as were considered requisite and necessary for a Franklinite were placed therein, perfectly regardless of Dabney's remonstrances and objections. And when the noon stage left the institution, Dabney might have been seen wedged in between Phil and Christie on the outside seat, smiling and radiant, for no boy could be indifferent to the real interest in his happiness which was displayed by all of his companions.

A welcome warm and sincere was extended to him by Christie's parents, whom in time he came to regard almost as his own. In their happy home the vacation passed almost like a joyous dream, wherein he was refreshed both in body and mind; and he went back to his duties again all the better for it, with an enlarged view of the purposes of life, and a stronger determination than ever, with God's help, to eradicate wholly from his character that selfishness which had well-nigh proved its ruin.

In after years, when Christie had become a successful minister of Christ, he often thought and spoke to Dabney of his first term

at the "Franklin," saying it was a blessed portion of his life, for in it he learned to trust in God and follow him, confident that he would lead him even THROUGH TRIALS TO TRIUMPH.

THE END.

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